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The Humboldt Bay region,
1850-1875

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Sacramento, April 30, 1929

HONORABLE C. C. YOUNG,
Governor of California.

Sir:

Herewith is presented a volume entitled *The Humboldt Bay Region, 1850-1875, A Study in the American Colonization of California*. This work is published with a twofold purpose: to record in detail the history of one of California's interesting regions, and to illustrate the use to which local historical sources may be put by students and scholars working in the field of California history.

Respectfully submitted.

THE CALIFORNIA STATE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

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The Humboldt Bay Region 1850-1875

A Study
in the American Colonization
of California

By Owen C. Coy, Ph. D.,
Director of the Association; Professor of California
History in the University of Southern California



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PREFACE

This volume is presented as a study in the American colonization of California. In its preparation the author has endeavored to keep two objects in mind: first, to write in narrative form the detailed history of what constitutes a distinct physiographic region of California; and second, to make a type study of materials available for the local history of the state as a whole.

The work was begun while the author was teaching in the high school at Eureka. Four or more years of residence in the region not only aroused an interest in its history but also gave a familiarity with its physical features, natural resources and chief industries, which aided materially in the study. Furthermore, the many friendships made with pioneer families and public officials greatly facilitated the work by rendering accessible much material in private hands, in newspaper files, and in the local public archives. The work was carried to completion during the years 1913-15 while the author was engaged in research in the Bancroft Library at University of California. Since then it has been revised but not materially changed except where later writings have contributed to the subject matter.

In contrast to many other parts of the state the Humboldt Bay region was not greatly affected by the Spanish and Mexican influence. Expeditions were made by the Spaniards along the coast, and Trinidad Bay discovered and named by them in 1775. Although they considered the establishment of settlements, none were actually made. In later years Russian-American fur traders hunted sea otter along the coast, and the trappers of the Hudson's Bay Company doubtless traversed its area in the quest for beaver but left no permanent trace except perhaps through the depletion of the number of fur-bearing animals. Whatever the Spaniard or trapper may have known of the region was of little value to the horde of gold seekers who invaded California following the gold discovery in 1848. Trinity River soon became populated with excited miners too busy to think of the neighboring country until forced from the gravel bars by winter floods. The desire to find the mouth of the Trinity as a possible means of shortening the route to the northern mines led the more enterprising of these miners to undertake an expedition which resulted in the re-discovery of Humboldt Bay. The region about it immediately sprang into prominence not only as an approach to the mining region but also as a valuable source of supply.

Founded and settled during a period of intense excitement and speculation, the four towns on Humboldt and Trinidad bays—Eureka, Union (Arcata), Bucksport, and Trinidad—competed keenly with each other for commercial and political supremacy. Lacking the influence of Spanish customs, a land policy was developed in accordance with the usual procedure of American settlement, adapted to conditions and modified by legislation in California. Indians, arable lands and timbered areas all hindered or helped the American settler in determining the location of

his holdings. With dense forests and the ocean near at hand the lumber industry quickly developed and with it shipbuilding and commerce. Upon the open hills outside of the timber belt cattle fattened upon the rich grasses and dairy farming developed into a leading occupation. Strong indications of oil led to a considerable influx of settlers during the sixties, greatly augmenting the population of the coast region south of Cape Mendocino there giving rise to the town of Petrolia. Failing the reward of wealth in mineral oil, many turned to agriculture and stock raising as more certain means of accumulating a competency, and remained to become permanent residents in the region.

Because of the isolation caused by the many mountains between Humboldt Bay and the other settled parts of California, this region was forced to develop for more than sixty years without any railway communication with the outside world, the ocean in the meantime furnishing the only highway for commerce. In a region so detached, independence in thought and action necessarily developed to such a degree as to affect the ideals and political opinion of the people. The local self-consciousness of the Humboldt Bay people is still an interesting characteristic of the region.

In so far as possible the author has tried to make full use of all the sources contributing to the history of the area during the years from 1850 to 1875. In this field he is most indebted to the local and state newspaper files, the local county and state archives, and to the documents published by the state and federal governments. Among the newspapers the most useful were naturally those published in the towns located near Humboldt Bay. The *Humboldt Times*, established in September, 1854, ran as a weekly paper during the whole of the period studied and is still published. The complete file for these years was carefully searched for contributions to the subject. The *West Coast Signal* and *Northern Californian* published during the later years were also examined. For the earlier period, as well as for data on commercial activities and other subjects, the San Francisco papers were drawn upon, especially the *Alta California*, the *San Francisco Herald*, and the *Bulletin*. From these papers much of that information which is of most interest to readers was obtained, for the newspapers reflect the events of popular interest in their day.

To the archives and official published documents we must turn for that substantial framework of fact upon which to base a careful study. The Humboldt County and Klamath County archives now preserved in the county courthouse at Eureka were found to contain most valuable information. The records of the county board of supervisors furnished data regarding the economic as well as political growth of the county. Preemption, deed, and other land record books and miscellaneous records contributed their full share, for it should be said that the early volumes yield a much larger proportion of interesting material than do the larger tomes of recent date. For a study of the population, use was made of the records dealing with naturalization and the registration of voters, supplemented by the federal census returns. Data for 1860 were taken from the original census returns now in the hands of the secretary of state at Sacramento. In the United States Land Office at Eureka complete data were found for matters dealing with the sale of public lands and those taken up under the preemption and homestead acts.

The published government documents, state and federal, are rich in information known to every worker in the field of United States history. The statutes and legislative journals give the workings of the state legislative bodies. The reports of the state surveyor general give both the reports of the county surveyors and full statistical tables relating to the economic conditions of the counties from data gathered by the county assessors. It is needless to say that this annual economic census furnishes valuable data regarding the development of the various local units of the state. From the reports of the state superintendent of public instruction data were obtained relating to the administration of schools and to the sale of school lands. Other state reports were found useful in their fields. Among the documents published by the federal government the most useful were those published by order of Congress. In these the annual reports of the Secretary of the Interior were found very helpful since they include the reports of the United States surveyor general for California and of the superintendent of Indian affairs.

Other sources of information were consulted. Among the printed books Bledsoe's *Indian Wars* and Carr's *Pioneer Days*, written by local men, were found to contain much information of value. The manuscript diary of Mrs. Casper S. Ricks contributes much to the knowledge of the early social life of Eureka. Many of the pioneers who came to Humboldt Bay during the first days of its settlement gave interesting and valuable sidelights upon the events of those early days. Among these should be mentioned the dictated statements of Dunbar D. Averell, Isaac Minor, William Lindsey, Byron Deming and W. T. Olmstead, as well as the autobiography of Robert Gunther. Grateful acknowledgements are due to Mr. Arthur Jewett of Eureka and A. Brizard, Inc., of Arcata for early pictures of those cities used to illustrate the text; to the Save-the-Redwoods League for the frontispiece, and to the Eureka Chamber of Commerce for pictures of the present day.

The author is under obligation to many who can not be mentioned by name but for whose assistance this work would be lacking in some particular part. He is particularly pleased to acknowledge his great indebtedness to Professor Herbert E. Bolton, of the University of California, through whose encouragement this work was undertaken and under whose sympathetic guidance the study was carried on. He wishes to express appreciation for the aid rendered by Professor Herbert I. Priestley, librarian of the Bancroft Library, and Mr. Joseph J. Hill, assistant librarian; and by Miss Hazel R. Bell and Miss Hester Jordan, who did much of the tedious work of checking references and otherwise preparing the text for publication. The authorities in the State Library have been most helpful, especially Miss Eudora Garoutte of the California Department. Public officials were invariably courteous even when in his inexperience the author sought historical data in unknown volumes and among miscellaneous papers. To Miss Dorothy Caton much credit is due for painstaking labor in proof-reading and other work while the volume has been in the process of publication. Gratitude is also due Miss Ethel Taylor and Miss Marie Speyer for assistance in proofreading. The staff of the State Printing Office has shown unusual patience and technical skill in the printing of the volume.

From many people of the Humboldt Bay region have come valuable suggestions and expressions of appreciation and encouragement. To these the author wishes to express sincere thanks and the hope that this volume may contribute in some measure to the record of the deeds and the perpetuation of the memory of the noble pioneers who laid the foundations of American civilization in this part of our fair state.

OWEN C. COY.

Los Angeles, 1929.



Photo by Gabriel Moulin

"This temple which the Great Architect has been building for a score of centuries is incomparably nobler, more beautiful and more serene than any erected by the hands of man."—Duncan McDuffie.



CHAPTER I

THE REDWOOD EMPIRE

A comprehensive treatment of the American colonization of California within the limits of a work of such proportions as the present would be an impossible task. So extensive is the State of California and so diversified its natural features and economic interests that conclusions drawn from observations in one region prove inapplicable to other areas, and any generalizations to be well-founded must be based upon a more or less detailed analysis of each separate locality. It is as such a contribution to this larger field that this work has been undertaken, and therefore no apologies are presented for the apparently restricted area under consideration.

Delimitation of the Region. The Humboldt Bay region may be defined roughly, and in its widest sense, as that part of northwestern California lying in and west of the Coast Range of mountains north of Mendocino, comprising the present counties of Humboldt, Del Norte and Trinity, together with the western part of Siskiyou County, as well as the northern part of Mendocino County. Before the settlements had begun to break it up into separate units this region was one great related area, the mining section along the rivers in the Trinity and Klamath mountains obtaining supplies from the seaports and agricultural districts along this stretch of coast. The Indian wars also involved practically the whole region, reaching far up the head waters of Eel River into northern Mendocino County.¹ In its later development, however, the bonds between the mining region in the back country and the coast became weakened as supply routes leading from the Sacramento Valley were developed and the mining country became more self-supporting. Furthermore, with the development of industry and agricultural settlements along the coast, that portion broke up into further divisions, the region around Crescent City being formed into Del Norte County, and the coast south of the Klamath River becoming eventually Humboldt County. Although this is distinctly the history of a physiological region rather than of the territory included within

¹ *Infra*, chapters IX-XI.

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the bounds of a single political division, the fortunate manner in which the boundaries of Humboldt County coincide with the area of settlement gives a particular value to the reports and statistics of that county.²

When the great distances so common in the western states are taken into account, the area under consideration is seen to be in no manner insignificant. If the territory comprising Humboldt County alone were transferred from the Pacific to the eastern coast of the United States it would be found to be larger than two of the smaller Atlantic states, the area of this one county being more than four hundred and fifty square miles greater than the combined land area of Delaware and Rhode Island,³ while the larger region exceeds by more than three thousand square miles the area of any of the New England states except Maine.⁴

The Coast Ranges. The unity of this region is due in large measure to the isolation resulting from the mountain barrier which separates the district around Humboldt Bay from the remaining settled area of the state. On account of this mountainous character of the country and the absence of a coastal plain the northern California coast presents little opportunity for settlement. To be sure, in the district comprising Marin and Sonoma counties the low-lying hills near the coast may be considered an exception to this general condition, but on account of its proximity to San Francisco Bay that territory must be regarded as part of the latter region. From the northern line of Sonoma County to a point above Cape Mendocino, the coast is rugged and offers little or no attraction in the way of harbors or good agricultural lands. The bottom lands of Eel River and Mad River, with Humboldt Bay lying between, form, therefore, a pleasant

² The present boundaries of Humboldt County include practically all the territory dependent upon Humboldt Bay. Before Klamath County was abolished in 1875 it included within its area that portion of the present Humboldt County lying north of a line drawn due east from the mouth of Mad River, as well as the western part of the present Siskiyou County. The records of Klamath County are to be found in the archives of Humboldt County, and have been used extensively in this study, especially for the early history of the region around Trinidad. The chief importance of this county was its mining interests, and with the exception of Trinidad, the coast region was of but little importance during this period. In general, the statistics of Klamath County may properly be disregarded in order to avoid confusion of areas.

³ The total land area of Delaware is 1965 sq. mi. and that of Rhode Island 1067 sq. mi., their combined area being 3032 sq. mi. The area of Humboldt County is 3507 sq. mi. Humboldt Bay, the only extensive water surface, does not occupy more than 25 sq. mi.

⁴ This larger area is approximately 12,500 sq. mi.: Humboldt, 3507; Trinity, 3276; Del Norte, 1546; one half of Siskiyou, 3039; one-third of Mendocino, 1133. Vermont, the largest of these states, has 9564 sq. mi.

contrast to this inhospitable shore line; and, with the exception of the lowlands around Crescent City and Smith River, which are more restricted in area and lacking in good harbor facilities, constitute practically the only district along the coast available for either commerce or agriculture except at great effort and expense.

The Coast Ranges rise more or less abruptly along their eastern side, forming the western boundary of the Sacramento Valley. Their general direction is southeast and northwest until they reach the Trinity region, where they turn to the northeast, being there known as the Trinity Mountains. Between this watershed and the ocean are innumerable small parallel ranges which give the region a distinctly mountainous character. The trails and roads leading up from the south usually follow these ridges or along the streams running between them. While there are here and there small fertile valleys, the mountainous character of the region presents a distinct barrier between the settlements around Humboldt Bay and those farther south.

The Klamath Mountains. To the north the Klamath Mountains, through which the Trinity and Klamath rivers flow, prevented free egress and ingress. They are more rugged and of different geological formation from the Coast Ranges to the south, the latter being of a softer material affording soil for grazing lands and scattered timber, while the Klamath and Trinity mountains appear as great masses of rock which find favor chiefly because of the precious metal buried within them or lying along the beds of their streams. The direction of these mountains is much less regular, some parts running north and south, others almost east and west.

The Rivers. The chief streams of the Humboldt Bay region proper are Eel River and Mad River, while to the north the mining district is drained by the Klamath-Trinity river system. Between Mad River and the Klamath are smaller streams, known as Redwood Creek and Little River, and south of Eel River are Bear and Mattole rivers. The general direction of all of these streams, with the exception of those of the extreme north, is from the southeast to the northwest, running through nearly parallel valleys between the mountain ranges.

Eel River. Eel River,⁵ the largest stream of the Humboldt Bay region, originates in the mountains far to the south, one of its branches rising in Lake County near the waters of Clear Lake. After following through a more or less open country in central and eastern Mendocino County, it passes through a rough and mountainous region, entering Humboldt County near the southeastern corner. After some distance the course of the river widens into a valley, and the growth of oak, alder, madrona, and fir trees gives place to the dense redwood forests through which it makes its way until within twelve or fifteen miles of the ocean. Here and there along the reaches of the river were to be found open meadows or prairies, but the chief open lands were along its lower course, between its Van Duzen branch and the ocean. When discovered it was thought to be a navigable river, and many attempts have since been made to use it for shipping purposes, but with unsatisfactory results owing to the bar at the river's mouth. On the other hand, the close proximity of the river to the southern end of Humboldt Bay early suggested the feasibility of a canal connecting the two waterways. Numerous projects of this nature have been advanced but without success, although before the time of better land transportation, goods and produce were regularly carried down the river and transported over the short stretch of land at Table Bluff to the ship landing on Humboldt Bay.⁶

Mad River. A short distance to the north of Humboldt Bay, and at one time probably flowing into that body of water, is a smaller stream known as Mad River. Although both shorter and smaller than Eel River the general description given for that river applies to this stream as well. It takes its rise among the mountains of southern Trinity County and flows northwesterly through a country valuable chiefly for grazing purposes. About twenty miles from its mouth it enters the dense redwood belt, through which it flows until within five or six miles of the ocean, when it opens out into a rich alluvial plain. No attempt has been made to navigate the stream, although it has been used extensively for floating logs down to tide-water.

The Klamath-Trinity River System. The Klamath and Trinity rivers form a system which, in amount of water

⁵ Its Indian name was Wiyot, or Weeott.

⁶ *Infra*, 133-134.

carried and extent of country drained, is the largest in northwestern California. The Klamath, the name given to both streams after their junction, takes its rise in the Klamath Lakes in southern Oregon, near the California line. After flowing southward into California it takes a westerly course nearly parallel with the state boundary, then southwest until it joins with the Trinity. It then turns abruptly, taking the northwesterly direction common to the other streams.

Along the whole of its course, with the exception of Shasta and Scott's River valleys, the stream flows through a rough mountainous country affording little or no opportunity for agricultural development. It was found to be rich in gold deposits, however, and during the early fifties became the center of much mining activity, especially along the Salmon and Scott's River branches. When first discovered it was believed to be a navigable stream, and a town was laid out on its banks some distance from the ocean; but the shifting sands at its mouth soon put an end to such a plan.⁷

The Trinity River has its source in the mountains around Mount Shasta, a short distance from the headwaters of the Sacramento River. In a manner similar to the Klamath it flows southwesterly along the western side of the Trinity Mountains, later turning in the general northwesterly direction and being joined by the Klamath, which then takes the course pursued by the Trinity. The region through which it flows is almost entirely mountainous, furnishing rich deposits for the goldseeker but affording little opportunity to the agriculturist. This river was discovered and named by Major P. B. Reading in 1845,⁸ when he crossed the mountain range west of the Sacramento River in search of furbearing animals. Believing it to flow into Trinidad Bay, discovered by the Spaniards, he named it the "Trinity River." Mining on this stream was begun by Reading in 1848 and has been carried on continuously since his time.

Lesser Streams. A few of the smaller streams yet remain to be considered. Between the Klamath and Mad River two streams have been mentioned. The more northerly of these is known as Redwood Creek, a name derived without

⁷ *Infra*, 68 n. 14.

⁸ It doubtless was known to the earlier trappers, for it lay on the route taken by Jedediah Smith in 1828, *infra*, 32.

doubt from the heavy redwood forests near its mouth and for some distance along its course. It rises nearly east of Humboldt Bay along the Bald Hills which stretch for some distance along the back country beyond the redwood forests. This region is particularly adapted to grazing purposes, and in places offers excellent opportunities for small farms. North of Mad River and a short distance south of Trinidad Bay is a small stream known as Little River. It lies wholly within the redwood belt, and with the exception of the excellent timber that has been found there it has been of little economic importance.

On the southern part of the Humboldt coast two rivers of some importance are to be noted. The first of these is Bear River, which enters the ocean about two miles north of Cape Mendocino. It is not of great length nor of much value in itself, but flows through a region excellently adapted to stock-raising and dairy purposes, and to some extent to agriculture. Farther south is the Mattole River, of greater length and of more importance. It has its source very near the southern limit of Humboldt County and flows in a northwesterly direction almost parallel to the coast line, entering the ocean a few miles south of Cape Mendocino. The higher lands are well adapted to grazing purposes, while the river bottom, although of no great breadth, affords excellent agricultural lands. The high mountains rising between this valley and the coast exclude the cold ocean winds and fogs and thus permit the raising of crops to which the coast in general is not adapted. Early in the development of the region deposits of petroleum and natural gas were discovered, the exploitation of which from time to time has been attempted with much enthusiasm but with unsatisfactory results.⁹

*Humboldt Bay.*¹⁰ Having discussed the various streams flowing to the north and south of Humboldt Bay we shall now give attention to this body of water which lends its name to the region under consideration. The form of the bay is that of a large lagoon,¹¹ and strange as it may seem, notwithstanding its size and importance it is not fed by

⁹ *Infra*, chapter XIV.

¹⁰ The Indian name for the bay was Qual-a-wa-loo.

¹¹ There are three smaller lagoons on the coast north of Trinidad, the more important being Big Lagoon and Stone Lagoon.

any stream of consequence. An official report of 1900 describes the bay as follows:¹²

The bay is an estuary about fourteen miles in length and varies from one-half to four miles in width. Its longer axis is parallel to the coast line. Inside the bay are several channels, one of which is nearly one-fourth of a mile wide, and carries a depth of twelve feet of water to Arcata, at the northern end of the bay, and about eighteen feet abreast of the town of Eureka. There is also a good channel of a depth of twelve feet to the southerly end of the bay.

A narrow strip of sand from one-eighth to one statute mile in width separates the bay from the ocean. The seaward side of this sand spit is generally low and flat. Toward the bay the sand dunes rise to a height in places exceeding fifty feet, portions of which are covered with grass, underbrush and timber. An opening 3000 to 3500 feet in width through this sand spit forms the natural entrance to Humboldt Bay.

The high water area of the bay is about 24 square miles and the low water area about 13 square miles. . . . The average tidal discharge passing through the entrance has been computed at 100,000 cubic feet per second. There are no streams of any consequence emptying into the bay.

The peculiar formation of Humboldt Bay tends to obscure it from ocean vessels. Before it was marked by improvements there was little to indicate the presence of such a body of water; furthermore, the bold bluff rising immediately behind the low-lying entrance made it even more difficult to observe the channel.¹³

The bar at the entrance of the bay has always been more or less of a hindrance to navigation, several vessels having been lost during the earlier years before a steam tug and pilot boat had been provided and harbor improvements made.¹⁴ At the time of its discovery in 1806 there were reported two fathoms of water on the bar, while in 1850 Lieut. Ottinger, reporting his discovery to the Secretary of the Treasury, gave the depth as four fathoms.¹⁵ Since then the amount of water at the entrance has varied accord-

¹² United States Army, *Report of the Chief of Engineers*, 1900, pp. 4238-4239.

¹³ *Infra*, 45, n. 24.

¹⁴ *Infra*, 122, n. 29.

¹⁵ *Infra*, 29; 130, n. 74.

ing to the storms and currents. The building of jetties in recent years has tended both to increase the depth and to straighten the course of the channel.¹⁶

Although Humboldt Bay is but a short distance from Mad River on the north and from Eel River on the south it is not fed by either of these streams. In the case of Mad River there is evidence that in past ages its waters must have flowed directly into the bay, for the land lying between is a low, alluvial deposit, with suggestions of an old channel. During the early years of the lumber industry a canal was cut turning the waters of the river into the bay, and logs were floated down to the sawmills on the bay.¹⁷ Eel River, on the other hand, is separated from the bay by a low, narrow tableland, leaving a beach of considerable width between the edge of the bluff and the ocean. On several occasions the project of a canal around this bluff has been considered, but the plan has never been carried into execution.¹⁸ While neither of these two larger streams flows into Humboldt Bay, there are several smaller ones which do. Taken in order from north to south they are Jacoby Creek, Freshwater and Ryan sloughs, Elk River, and Salmon Creek. The amount of water carried by these streams is not large, but they were used extensively for floating logs during the early period of the lumber business.

Agricultural Areas. While indirect reference has been made in the preceding pages to the economic resources of parts of the region, it may not be out of place if they are again considered in a brief review. In the immediate vicinity of Humboldt Bay, extending from the bottom lands of Mad River to Eel River Valley, valuable agricultural lands lay open to the pioneer settler without the necessity of much labor or expense. The richness of these lands, especially along the river bottoms, is attested by the fact that they have been cultivated continuously from the time of their first settlement to the present without materially impairing their productivity.

¹⁶ The first jetties were constructed during the years 1887-99, but proved inadequate and have been subsequently replaced. The north jetty completed in 1925 extends about 4500 feet into the ocean, while the south jetty which was completed in 1927 is 5100 feet long. These jetties have greatly improved the harbor entrance by broadening and deepening the channel. U. S. Army, *Annual Report of Chief Engineer*, 1928, part 1, pp. 1652-55.

¹⁷ San Francisco, *Herald*, Dec. 12, 1854; Eureka, *Humboldt Times*, May 1, 1858.

¹⁸ *Infra*, 134; Doolittle, *The official township map of Humboldt County, California*.

North of Mad River a narrow strip of country, including and extending north from Dow's Prairie, offered opportunity for agricultural settlements. In like manner, along the southern coast Bear River and Mattole River valleys early proved an attraction to the settler; the latter on account of its peculiar formation which shuts it off from the cold coast winds and fogs, being especially adapted to the growing of crops not ordinarily raised along the northern coast. In the interior many prairies and fertile valleys tempted the pioneer to take up more isolated tracts, which as the years passed became the centers of small communities. Angel's Ranch, near Bald Mountain, and Kneeland Prairie were among the first of these lands to be occupied although other locations soon followed.¹⁹

Farther in the interior, along the Trinity and the Klamath rivers, good agricultural land was scarce, Hoopa Valley, on the Trinity just above its junction with the Klamath, being the only important exception. This is a beautiful valley, about ten miles in length, which had become the center of a thriving agricultural settlement before it was set apart as an Indian reservation.²⁰ Farther up the Trinity River, Hayfork Valley, containing about two or three thousand acres, and the much smaller Hyampom Valley afforded practically all the available agricultural land in all this area. Similarly, along the Klamath River almost no arable land was to be found below Scott's River and Shasta valleys, and on account of their great distance these are scarcely to be considered with the region under discussion, except as they competed with the coast region in supplying the mines along the river.

Grazing Lands. Closely associated with agriculture was the live stock industry, for many of the lands that were later to become important agricultural settlements were in their earlier history used for grazing. The Bear and Mattole river valleys with the surrounding grass-covered hills afforded the best possible grazing lands, while the long line of Bald Hills and mountains extending along the interior between the redwood belt and the more rugged mountains of Trinity County were likewise of much value. In the chapters on

¹⁹ *Infra*, 97.

²⁰ *Infra*, 193-194.

the Indian wars the repeated references to Indian depredations upon the stock of the settlers on Redwood Creek, upper Mad River, Yager Creek, the Van Duzen, and Larrabee Creek, are ample evidence of the extent of the region then occupied by the stockmen.

Timber. The greatest single factor in the development of the region around Humboldt Bay has without doubt been the redwood lumber industry. The redwood belt, a term applied to the dense redwood forests running north and south along the coast, extends from a point near the Oregon-California line southward along the Coast Range Mountains into Monterey County. In the vicinity of Humboldt Bay its width varied from six to fourteen miles, and before the invasion of the white man, with the consequent clearing of timber and building of roads, formed an almost impassable barrier.²¹ The immense quantity of redwood timber in the region may be judged from the fact that notwithstanding the great quantity of lumber that has been cut during the sixty-five or more years intervening since the region was settled, it is estimated that not more than one-sixth of the timber has been taken. Unfortunately, however, this can not continue indefinitely, and unless methods are adopted which involve less waste and destruction the time will eventually come when these valuable forests will have been entirely destroyed. Upon the more open ridges outside of the redwood belt other kinds of timber are also to be found, among which are fir, spruce, alder, tan-oak, and madrona.

Mineral Deposits. Although Humboldt Bay was first discovered and settled during the period of intense mining excitement, the region in its immediate vicinity never possessed any great mineral wealth. With the exception of the Gold Bluffs, on the coast between the Klamath River and Trinidad Head, no gold has been found south and west of the Trinity and Klamath watershed, but these streams and the mountains through which they flow were found to possess great quantities of the precious metal. The mines of this region were known as the northern mines, and during the early period competed closely with those of the Sierra Nevada in the amount of gold produced.

²¹ *Infra*, 39-40; Doolittle and Lentell, county maps.

Reports of the discovery of other minerals have from time to time been made, but up to the present no attempts to develop these resources have met with success. During the later fifties unmistakable evidence in the Bear River and Mattole region pointed to the presence of petroleum and natural gas, and for a time the oil business bid fair to out-rank all other lines of industry. The methods of operation, however, proved inadequate, and thus far the development of these resources has been unprofitable.²² Persistent rumors of coal deposits along Eel River and the discovery of copper ore in other parts have led many to believe that the region possesses much mineral wealth yet to be developed.

The Climate. One of the things that most favorably impressed the first visitors to Humboldt Bay was the evenness of the temperature and the freshness of the verdure during the summer months, a season when in other parts of the state the weather was disagreeably warm and the grass brown.²³ Unfortunately, complete climatological data for this region during the earlier years is not available, the United States Weather Bureau not having been established at Eureka until 1887. From the reports of this bureau it is shown that the average annual rainfall at Eureka for the years from 1878 to 1927, inclusive, was 39.76 inches, and that the mean annual temperature from 1887 to 1928, inclusive, was 51.6°. From a report for the years 1887 to 1928, inclusive, the highest temperature reached at Eureka was given as 85.2°, and the lowest for the same period as 20.3°; the average daily maximum temperature was 57.0°, and the minimum 46.2°, giving an average daily range of but 10.8°. This indicates that there is little change in temperature during the various seasons of the year, the average winter temperature being 47.5°; the spring temperature, 50.1°; the summer, 55.4°; and the fall temperature, 53.5°. The prevailing winds are the trade winds, which blow in from the northwest, especially during the spring and summer months. Ocean fogs are also frequent during the summer, sometimes drifting in toward land during the afternoons of the warmer days, at other times hanging over the coast region for several days in succession.

²² *Infra*, chapter XIV.

²³ San Francisco, *Alta California*, Aug. 4, 1850.

The description of the climate here given for Humboldt Bay and the immediate coast region must not be considered as applicable to the interior, for as one travels inland the effect of the ocean is less and the changes in climate become marked, the weather being much warmer in summer and colder in winter. Reports for the interior parts of the region are not so full; but at Orleans Bar, on the Klamath River, the records kept for twelve years preceding 1914 show for that place a mean annual temperature of 61.5°, and an average annual rainfall of 54.65 inches.²⁴

The Native Indians. No account of the natural conditions of the region would be complete without at least a brief description of the native population which was in possession of the land at the time the white race began to settle there. Owing to the diversified topography of California the Indians of the state separated into a great number of more or less distinct divisions, and in this regard the region around Humboldt Bay forms no exception.

The Wiyot, or Humboldt Bay Indians. The natives inhabiting the region immediately surrounding Humboldt Bay are known to the student of ethnology as the Wiyot, or Wishok Indians. Their territory extended along Mad River, from its mouth to a short distance above the present town of Blue Lake, and from there followed the watershed between the bay streams and those flowing into Mad and Eel rivers. The valley of this latter stream, as far as the Van Duzen fork, was Wiyot territory, while the southern limit was the Bear River Range, which meets the coast a few miles north of Cape Mendocino. Since dense redwood forests covered the greater part of this country it is probable that most of their food was obtained from the sea or streams. They were divided into three groups, according to their location: these being the Mad River, Batawat or Pattawot; the Humboldt Bay, or Wiki; and the Eel River, Wiyot or Wiyat. In 1853 it was estimated that there were about eight hundred Indians in these three groups.²⁵

²⁴ Archives United States weather bureau, Eureka, *Climatological record*, 1929.

²⁵ Loud, *Ethnogeography and archaeology of the Wiyot territory*; Kroeber, in Hodge, *Handbook of American Indians north of Mexico*, II, 964; also Buchanan's report accompanying Message of President, Feb. 6, 1857 (Serial 906, Doc. 76), 23-26; Gibbs, *Journal of the expedition of Colonel Redick M'Kee United States Indian agent, through northwestern California*, 1851, in Schoolcraft, *Archives of aboriginal knowledge*, III, 126-133.

The Yurok, or Lower Klamath Indians. Located along the coast north of the Wiyots and on the lower Klamath River were the Yurok Indians, a tribe constituting the Weitspeckan linguistic family. Their region extended from the line of the Wiyots, near the mouth of Little River, up the coast as far as Wilson Creek, a few miles above the mouth of the Klamath River, and up this river as far as Bluff Creek, a stream flowing into the Klamath about six miles above the junction of this river with the Trinity. Their settlements usually lay close to the river or ocean beach. Along the river their language was quite uniform, but on the coast, from Gold Bluffs to Trinidad, it varied in the different villages. In their culture they appear to have been closely united with the Karok and Hupa tribes who joined them on the rivers above.²⁶

The Karok, or Upper Klamath Indians. The Karok Indians, who constituted the Quoratean family, occupied the territory along the Klamath River from Red Cap Creek to Indian Creek. In appearance they closely resembled the Yurok and Hupa, as they did also in their life and culture. Their language, however, was fundamentally different, and they had different games and ceremonies. They had three chief village centers, located near Orleans Bar, at the mouth of the Salmon River, and near the mouth of Clear Creek.²⁷

The Hupa, or Hoopa Valley Indians. By far the greater part of the region now included within the limits of Humboldt County was at one time occupied by various bands or tribes of Athapascans. These are characterized by ethnologists as being the most widely distributed of all the linguistic families of North America, for they extended from Alaska to Texas, and from Hudson Bay to California.²⁸ Probably the most noted tribe in this region is the Hupa tribe, but other related tribes held parts of the territory south as far as upper Eel River and the Mattole.

The Hupa tribe occupied Hoopa Valley and probably held jurisdiction over the lower Trinity River as far as its South Fork.²⁹ In their relationship with other tribes they seem

²⁶ Hodge, *Handbook*, II, 1012.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 659.

²⁸ Goddard and Swanton, "The Athapaskan Family," in Hodge, *Handbook*, I, 108.

²⁹ Goddard, *Life and culture of the Hupa*, 7.

to have associated more closely with the Yuroks and Karoks of the Klamath River than with the other Athapascan tribes which were located to the south and west. This was doubtless due largely to physiographic conditions, for the river offered an easy means of transportation and hence led to communication and trade, whereas the mountains separated them from other tribes of their family.³⁰ With the Yuroks they both traded and intermarried freely and each attended the dances and ceremonials of the other, a relationship which was also shared by the Chilulas, their nearest Athapascan neighbors on Redwood Creek.³¹ The number included in the Hupa tribe in the earlier years is not known, but at the time they were placed upon the reservation in 1865 their population was about six hundred and fifty.³²

The Chilula, or Redwood Creek Indians. The Bald Hills and Redwood Creek were occupied by an Athapascan tribe known as the Chilulas. Although separated by a high ridge from the Hupas on the east, they seem to have been more intimate with them than with any of their other neighbors; they were, however, also friendly with the Yuroks on the Klamath River above them, and with the Whilkuts, their neighbors on upper Mad River. In their culture they were closely allied with this latter tribe.³³ The trails from both Trinidad and Humboldt Bay crossed the territory of the Chilulas and trouble soon arose between them and the whites, for which reason they seem to have gained a bad reputation among the packers.³⁴

The Whilkut, or Mad River Indians. Another Athapascan tribe, known as the Whilkuts, occupied a portion of upper Mad River and that part of Redwood Creek above the Chilulas, and were consequently spoken of as the Mad River Indians. In their culture they were closely connected with the Chilulas and Hupas, although with the latter they had but little direct intercourse. As with the Chilulas their territory was crossed by the packers, and there were frequent and bloody conflicts between the two races.³⁵

³⁰ Goddard, *The Morphology of the Hupa language*, 9.

³¹ Goddard, *Notes on the Chilula Indians of northwestern California*, 266.

³² Goddard, *Life and culture*, 9.

³³ Goddard, *Chilula Indians*, 266-267. Plate 38 gives the location of each of the villages.

³⁴ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 134. For perfidy of the whites see *infra*, 150-151, n. 59.

³⁵ Goddard, in Hodge, *Handbook*, II, 938; Goddard, *Chilula Indians*, 268.

The Kuneste Group. Along the Eel River, above the Van Duzen, was located the most southerly of the Athapascan tribes on the Pacific Coast—the Kuneste group. This group was made up of several different tribes, which were very loosely connected as far as mode of government was concerned, but used similar languages and possessed a common culture. The subdivisions of this group were the Lassiks, the Sinkyones, the Wailakis, the Katos, and the Mattoles.³⁶

The Lassik Indians. This tribe, which takes its name from its last great chief, occupied a part of Eel River and its eastern tributaries, the Van Duzen, and Larrabee and Dobbin creeks, also a portion of upper Mad River. In their associations they seem to have been hostile to their Athapascan neighbors and to have been friendly with the Wintuns to the east of them. To the latter they were sometimes considered as related, but their language indicates their connection with the Athapascan family. Their determined resistance to the encroachments of the whites resulted very disastrously to them.³⁷

*The Sinkyone, or South Fork Indians.*³⁸ The Indians of the Sinkyone tribe lived along the lower South Fork of Eel River, with settlements on Bull and Salmon creeks, and also extended to the coast at Shelter Cove, and for a short distance south of it. They differed but little from their eastern neighbors, the Wailaki. During the Indian wars they were removed to the Smith River Reservation and later taken to Hoopa.

*The Wailaki and Kato Tribes.*³⁹ Two other Athapascan tribes occupied the upper waters of Eel River and belong rather to Mendocino than to the Humboldt Bay region; these are the Wailaki and Kato tribes. The former held the valley of Eel River from Kekawaka Creek to within a short distance of Round Valley, while the territory of the latter tribe lay just to the west of this in Cahto and Long valleys.

*The Mattole Indians.*⁴⁰ The Mattole Indians, whose name appears upon the map of the region, occupied the territory along the Humboldt coast, south of the Wiyots and

³⁶ Goddard, in Hodge, *Handbook*, I, 735.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, I, 761.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, II, 576.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, I, 665; II, 893-894.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, I, 822-823.

west of their Athapascan neighbors along Eel River, including within their country the valleys of the Bear and Mattole rivers. In the Indian wars they were practically exterminated by the whites, the remnant being removed to the Mendocino Reservation and later to Hoopa.

The Wintun Tribe. Although the tribes already discussed were those with whom the people of the Humboldt Bay region came most directly in contact, mention should also be made of some of the other important divisions farther inland. One of the largest of these was the Wintun tribe, who occupied the western part of the Sacramento Valley and the upper waters of the Trinity River.⁴¹ Lack of definite information as to the exact western limits, as well as to their associations with the Lassiks and other coast tribes, has led to much confusion regarding them.⁴² It is probable, however, that they had but little influence upon the Humboldt Bay region.

*The Chimariko Tribe.*⁴³ The Chimarikos were a small tribe, forming a linguistic family by themselves. They were located upon the Trinity River around New River, extending down the main stream as far as South Fork and, according to some authorities, up this latter as far as Hayfork. They appear to have had little to do with the Hupas down the river, but to have allied themselves rather with their Wintun and Shasta neighbors. Burnt Ranch was one of their villages.

The Shasta Indians. The Shasta Indians were a linguistic family composed of several tribes. Their territory, with the exception of Shasta and Scott's valleys, was for the most part an irregular and mountainous region, including the Salmon River basin and that part of the Klamath River above the Karok country.⁴⁴ They frequently gave trouble to the miners of the Salmon River region, and at times aided the hostile Hoopa Valley Indians; but since they were separated by high mountains from the coast they had otherwise little direct influence upon either the native or white population of that region.⁴⁵

⁴¹ Goddard, in Hodge, *Handbook*.

⁴² *Infra*, 146, n. 35.

⁴³ Dixon, *The Chimariko Indians and language*, 296, 305.

⁴⁴ Dixon, in Hodge, *Handbook*, 11, 527-528.

⁴⁵ For general treatment of these tribes see Kroeber, *Handbook of the Indians of California*. For illustrations of life and customs see also Coy, *Pictorial History of California*, nos. 4-21, and *infra*, opposite p. 180.

CHAPTER II

EARLY EXPLORATIONS, 1542-1846

While the main purpose of this study is to trace the development of the Humboldt Bay region since its occupation by the American people, this may well be preceded by a brief summary of the steps by which the region became known.¹ The exploration of this portion of the state may be divided roughly into three periods: first, that of maritime exploration under the Spanish regime, 1542-1800; second, the period of exploration of the fur traders, 1800-46; and lastly, the period of invasion by the Americans in their search for gold deposits and lands suitable for settlement.

Cabrillo and Ferrelo, 1542-43. The first European navigators on the Alta California coast were the Spaniards, Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo and his subordinate officer and successor, Bartolome Ferrelo, in the years 1542 and 1543. It has generally been considered that Cabrillo² explored the coast to a point north of Cape Mendocino, and that Ferrelo's later explorations led him to some point opposite the Oregon coast. But a careful comparison of the meager details given in the reports of these expeditions with the physical features of the coast has led George Davidson,³ of the Coast Survey, to conclude that Cabrillo's most northerly point was in the neighborhood of Fort Ross, some distance south of Point Arena. The next year Ferrelo succeeded to the command and in endeavoring to push farther north, reached the latitude attained by Cabrillo, when a fierce southeast gale drove his vessel offshore. He probably reached a point as far north as $42\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, but far out of sight of land. He was content to turn southward as soon as the wind permitted,

¹ However valuable an exhaustive examination of the early explorations on the northwest coast might be, this does not come within the scope of the present study, and in this particular field the work of earlier investigators has been in large measure followed.

² The more familiar name Cabrillo has been retained, although it should be noted that his family name was Rodriguez, rather than Cabrillo. Chapman, *The founding of Spanish California*, 7.

³ I have here followed the work of Davidson in *The discovery of Humboldt Bay and Voyages of discovery and exploration on the northwest coast of America from 1539 to 1603*, since he stands as an authority on questions concerning the geography of these explorations, having spent the greater part of his life in the active service of the Coast Survey. More recently a very valuable contribution has been made by H. R. Wagner in his "Spanish voyages to the northwest coast." For his reference to Cabrillo see Calif. Hist. Soc. *Quarterly*, VII, 20-27.

again approaching land in the vicinity of Fort Ross, whence he continued southward along the coast. If these are the facts, then, in so far as these expeditions are concerned, we must conclude that Humboldt still remained an undiscovered region.⁴

After the year 1565 the Manila galleons, upon their return from the Philippines, came at times close to the coast of Alta California and thereby gained a familiarity with its main headlands. Since they observed the rule of turning southward as soon as they approached land, it is doubtful whether they obtained more than a very superficial knowledge of this portion of the coast.⁵

Francis Drake, 1579. The next explorer on the northwest coast was the English captain, Francis Drake, who entered the Pacific through the Straits of Magellan in 1578. Having loaded his vessel, the *Golden Hind*, with plunder from the Spanish towns and the Manila galleon, and feeling fully avenged toward the Spaniards, he sailed into the northern waters. When off the coast, at about 43°, the intense cold and adverse winds forced him closer to shore, and he cast anchor in "a bad bay."⁶ But since this anchorage was exposed to "many extreme gusts and flaws" and at times beset with the "most uile, thicke, and stinking fogges" he determined to seek another anchorage farther south.⁷ In regard to this part of Drake's voyage the original narratives are sadly lacking, with the exception of the meager information given in the manuscript chart of Robert Dudley.⁸ However, on the basis of the facts given, Davidson concludes:

Drake was twelve days, with presumably favorable winds and moderate weather, sailing along the coast by day, and laying to at night; full of anxiety, and keenly alert to find a convenient harbor where he could heave down his vessel and stop her leaks, as well as lay in

⁴ Bolton, *Spanish exploration in the Southwest*, 9, n. 1; Hittell, *The History of California*, 1, 76, holds a different opinion.

⁵ Schurz, "The Manila galleon and California," in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, XXI (1917), 107-126; Chapman, *Founding of Spanish California*, 7-8; Bancroft, *History of California*, 1, 94.

⁶ Davidson identifies this as Chetko Cove, Oregon. For a careful study of the various accounts of Drake on this coast see Davidson, *Francis Drake on the northwest coast of America in the year 1579*. The two standard narratives are given in Drake, *The world encompassed*, 113-133, 219-226.

⁷ Drake, *World encompassed*, 113-115.

⁸ This chart is reproduced in Davidson, *Discovery of Humboldt Bay*. It was first published in 1630, its author claiming to have derived his data from the navigator himself.

a fresh store of provisions and water. The coast he traced is bold, compact, and nearly straight between controlling headlands; and to the southeastward of Crescent City Reef . . . is almost free from dangers except those close in shore. Drake could thus safely reconnoitre the shores at a distance of two or three miles, except at Blunt's Reef off Cape Mendocino . . . Under Trinidad Head . . . he would be attracted closer in shore by the prospect of a harbor, and by the low, sandy and retreating shore, with retreating hills to the eastward and southeastward. From the masthead he may have seen the extensive waters of Humboldt Bay over the narrow and comparatively low sand dunes near the entrance; but he certainly could not determine the entrance, because at the very opening between the low sand spits it is masked by the bright face of Red Bluff,⁹ 96 feet high, standing square abreast and inside the mouth at less than half a mile therefrom. In the stretch between Trinidad Head and Cape Mendocino, the discolored waters passing through the clear ocean waters would indicate the existence of rivers or bays; but Mad River, north of the Bay, and Eel River, to the south of it, do not offer any well defined marks to betray their entrances to the navigator.¹⁰

Although in the absence of more definite information we can form no positive conclusions, we are forced to consider seriously the suggestion that Drake was the first European explorer to discover the Humboldt coast.¹¹

Cape Mendocino was the first of the natural features of Humboldt to be called by other than the native name. Just when and under what circumstances the name was given is not known, but its first recorded use is in the report in the voyage of Francisco Gali in 1584. On his return from the Philippines with the Manila galleon he struck the Alta California coast and sailed south along the coast to Cape San Lucas, which, he says, "is the beginning of the lands of California . . . being five [five] hundred leagues distant from Cape Mendocino."¹² There is, however, no indication that he was responsible for the name other than giving us the first record of its use. There are two theories as to

⁹ Now called Buhne's Point.

¹⁰ Davidson, *Discovery of Humboldt Bay*, 2-3.

¹¹ Bancroft, *California*, I, 94. H. R. Wagner, *Sir Francis Drake's Voyage*, 154-169, gives a plausible argument to show that Trinidad Bay was the site of Drake's anchorage.

¹² Hakluyt, Richard, *The third and last volume of the voyages, navigations, traffiques, and discoveries of the English nation*, 446. This is the third volume of Hakluyt, *The principal navigations, voyages . . . of the English nation*. London, 1599-1600.

its origin; one, that the name had been given by some previous navigator of whom we have no record; and the second that it may have been applied in Mexico to some cape discovered but not named by Cabrillo or Ferrelo. There can be little doubt that the name was given in honor of Antonio de Mendoza, the viceroy of New Spain at the time of the Cabrillo expedition.¹³

Vizcaino, 1603. During the winter of 1602-03 Sebastian Vizcaino was engaged in making explorations along the northwest coast. After leaving Monterey Bay, his two vessels, the *San Diego* and the frigate *Tres Reyes*, became separated. When, upon June 12, 1603, the *San Diego* reached Cape Mendocino she was in no condition to continue the voyage, as her crew were sick and the weather exceedingly stormy. However, in spite of the decision to turn southward, the storm drove her on as far as latitude 42°, but prevented a close inspection of the coast.¹⁴ In the meantime the frigate had been driven even farther north, to the vicinity of Cape Blanco, in 43°. The difficulties and dangers encountered did not permit an adequate study of the coastline, for both the commander and the pilot died during the voyage; yet from the account of the boatswain some interesting information is derived.

In describing the voyage north from Drake's Bay the narrative reads:¹⁵

and further on in latitude 41, near Cape Mendocino, they found a very large bay, into which entered a full flowing river which came in from the north with such force that they were not able to enter it more than two leagues, although they endeavored for a whole day with full sails and wind astern to force their way in. The river was then rising and carried many trees with it. The country is timbered with very large pine and oak forests. The coast runs from this place north and south [*de norte sur*] to Cape Mendocino and thence it runs northeast and southwest as far as Cape Blanco in latitude 43°.

¹³ Bancroft, *California*, I, 80, 94-96; *History of the North Mexican States and Texas*, I, 139, n. 9; Hittell, *California*, I, 76, ascribes this to Ferrelo.

¹⁴ Bolton, *Spanish exploration in the Southwest*, 95-97, gives a translation of Vizcaino's diary.

¹⁵ Carrasco, *Documentos referentes al reconocimiento de las costas de las Californias*, 171; Bolton, *Spanish exploration in the Southwest*, 101.



In the official report of the voyage these observations of the boatswain were incorporated in a modified form as follows:

In latitude $39\frac{1}{4}^{\circ}$ he discovered a copious river, and an island at the entrance of a very good and secure port, and another large bay in latitude $40\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$, into which another large river emptied. A great number of Indians came out to them in canoes made of pine and cedar planks, but because there were so many people they did not dare to go up the river with the launch, although the Indians invited them to do so, giving them many fish, game, hazel nuts, chestnuts, acorns, and other things to induce them to go with them up the river.¹⁶

From these accounts not many definite facts can be deduced. Nevertheless, it is certain that the frigate must have discovered and probably entered what appeared to be a large bay, at the mouth of a navigable river. Unfortunately, the location of this bay is obscured in much confusion and speculation. The map shows it to be south of Cape Mendocino, which is manifestly impossible; Torquemada, on the other hand, places it farther north, near Cape Blanco. If, however, these other accounts are regarded not as independent sources but as attempts to interpret the observations of the boatswain the confusion to some extent disappears, and the suggestion becomes possible that the river here described may have been Eel River, which enters the ocean in latitude $49^{\circ} 39'$, about fourteen miles north of Cape Mendocino. During a freshet, as here described, it greatly overflows its banks, in which case the valley near its mouth might well be mistaken for a large bay, with sufficient depth to afford navigation for a great distance. The references to the trees borne by the current, and the heavy

¹⁶ Vizcaino, "Diary," in Bolton, *Spanish exploration in the Southwest*, 102. There are two other less important accounts of this voyage. The first is a brief report by Father Ascencion, who accompanied the expedition as one of the spiritual advisors and served also as one of its two cosmographers. He adds little detail in respect to this part of the coast. See *ibid.*, 104-134, for a translation of this report, pages 120-121 of which refer to this region. The other account is by Torquemada, written in Mexico soon after the return of the expedition. He describes a large river near Cape Blanco but does not mention the one near Cape Mendocino. Although he may have had other sources of information, it is very probable that he based his statements upon the report of the boatswain, in which case his location of the river was an error. The map which is here reproduced from the atlas accompanying [*Espinosa y Tello*] *Relacion del viaje hecho por las goletas Sutil y Mexicana en el ano de 1792*, was compiled and reduced from the cartas of the cosmographer of the expedition. Whether these should be taken as an independent source or merely an attempt to interpret graphically the accompanying narrative is not determined.

forests of pines (redwoods) are in keeping with local conditions.¹⁷

Bodega and Heceta, 1775. Notwithstanding repeated attempts on the part of the officials of New Spain to push their explorations and settlements farther north, circumstances prevented the accomplishment of these designs. Thus it was that during a century and a half after the voyage of Vizcaino, with the possible exception of the annual Manila galleon, whose mission did not allow much time to be spent in coast exploration, this portion of the coast was not visited by any Spanish or other European exploring vessel.¹⁸ In the latter part of the eighteenth century reports of the activities of the Russians in the far north, coupled with the fear of English advances, aroused the Spanish to a new period of exploration and settlement.¹⁹ At this time Monterey and the newly discovered San Francisco Bay were occupied, and three maritime expeditions in rapid succession were fitted out and despatched to the northern waters to investigate the rumors of Russian and English encroachments, and to make more secure the claims of the Spanish monarch to these shores.²⁰

In the early summer of 1775 two vessels under command of Bruno de Heceta worked their way slowly up the coast, the hardihood of these early Spanish navigators being attested by the fact that one of the vessels, the *Sonora*, was merely a "schooner having a keel of eighteen cubits and breadth of beam of six." The latter was under command of Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Cuadra, with Francisco Mourelle as pilot, and in addition to these officers carried a

¹⁷ The author does not assume that this is the solution of the problem, as he believes it to be not only possible but indeed probable that the vessel entered one of the streams along the Humboldt coast. Davidson concludes otherwise; but in drawing his conclusions he had neither the account of the boatswain nor the Vizcaino diary, and was forced to rely upon the cartas and the less reliable account of Torquemada. Davidson, *Voyages on the northwest coast*, and his *Discovery of Humboldt Bay*. Mr. H. R. Wagner, "Spanish voyage to the northwest coast in the sixteenth century," in *Calif. Hist. Soc. Quarterly*, VII, 368-70, notes 175, 205, interprets "Cabo Mendocino" of the Vizcaino voyage as being the same as the modern Trinidad Head, and the large river as Mad River.

¹⁸ Schurz, *Manila galleon and California*.

¹⁹ The English in the South Sea had been a source of worry to the Spanish government since the time of Drake, but after the middle of the eighteenth century the operations of the Hudson's Bay Company presented much graver dangers in the northwest. The Russians were now also making slow but gradual advance. In 1741 Behring had sighted the mainland of America, in 1745 settlements were made on the Alaskan Islands, and by 1760 the American fur trade had begun. These facts were not all known or appreciated by the Spanish government; yet enough was known to cause apprehension for the Spanish claim to this territory. Chapman, *Founding of Spanish California*, 173-186.

²⁰ These were the expeditions of Perez in 1774, Heceta and Bodega in 1775, and Arteaga and Bodega in 1779.

crew of fourteen men.²¹ On account of adverse winds the early part of the voyage had been made at some distance from land, but when off the coast near Cape Mendocino, judging from the color of the water that they were nearing the shore, they decided to direct their course toward land, hoping they might be able to find an anchorage. The pilot of the *Sonora* portrays most vividly this part of the cruise:²²

On the ninth [of June] . . . we saw, with greatest clearness, the plains, rocks, bays, headlands, breakers, and trees. . . . At the same time we sailed along the coast, and endeavored to find out a port, being at the distance only of a mile, and approaching to a high cape, which seemed to promise shelter, though we were obliged to proceed cautiously, as many small islands concealed from us some rocks, which scarcely appeared above the surface of the sea.

As we now perceived a land-locked harbor to the SW. we determined to enter it . . . The schooner cast anchor opposite to a little village, which was situated at the bottom of a mountain. . . . After this we sounded the interior parts of the port, and we found sufficient depth of water to anchor at a bow's shot from the land . . . and fastened our cables to some rocks which nature seemed to have fixed for this purpose. We took, however, the precaution to let fall two anchors on the opposite side; (viz to the S. and SW.) on which the frigate followed our example.

As soon as we had anchored, some Indians in canoes came on board, who, without the least shyness, trucked some skins for bugles. . . .

On the 11th we had fixed everything with regard to our anchorage, and we determined to take possession of the country, upon the top of a high mountain, which lies at the entrance of the port. For this purpose our crews divided into different parties, which were properly posted, so that the rest might proceed without any danger of an attack. We moreover placed centinels at a considerable distance, to reconnoitre the paths used by the Indians, who possessed themselves of those parts from which we had most to fear. With these precautions the crews marched in two bodies, who adored the holy cross upon disembarking, and when at the top of the mountain formed a square, the center of which became a chapel. Here the holy cross was again raised,

²¹ Bodega, "Primer viaje . . . ano de 1775" in Spain, *Anuario de la direccion de hidrografia*. The accounts frequently spell the pilot's name Maurelle. He himself spelled it as given here.

²² Mourelle, *Journal of a voyage in 1775*, 13-23. This extract is taken from an English translation, published in 1781. A similar account is given by Bodega.

the mass celebrated, with a sermon, and possession taken, with all the requisites enjoined by our instructions. We also fired both our musquetry and cannon, which naturally made the Indians suppose we were irresistible. . . . As we took thus possession on the day when holy mother church celebrates the most holy Trinity, we named the port accordingly.²³

What we saw of the country leaves us no doubt of its fertility, and that it is capable of producing all the plants of Europe. In most of the gullies of the hills there are rills of clear and cool water, the sides of which are covered with herbs (as in the meadows of Europe) of both agreeable verdure and smell. Amongst these were Castilian roses, smallage, lilies, plantain, thistles, camomile, and many others. We likewise found strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, sweet onions, and potatoes, all which grew in considerable abundance, and particularly near the rills. . . . The hills were covered with very large, high, and strait pines, amongst which I observed some of 120 feet high,²⁴ and 4 in diameter towards the bottom.

All these pines are proper for masts and shipbuilding.

In the W. part there is a hill 50 fathoms (tuessas) high, joining to the continent on the N. side, where there is another rising of 20, both of which afford protection not only from the winds, but the attack of an enemy.

At the entrance of the port is a small island of considerable height, without a single plant upon it; and on the sides of the coast are high rocks, which are very convenient for disembarking; goods also may be shipped so near the hill (that of 50 fathoms in height) that a ladder may be used from the land to the vessel; and near the sand are many small rocks, which secure the ship at anchor from the SE. and SW.

The expedition remained in the bay for nine days, during which time a good supply of water was obtained and the schooner careened and equipped with a new mast, yard and sails; a chart of the harbor was prepared and the manners and customs of the Indians carefully observed and described. A day was spent in exploring "a river which came from the SW.,"²⁵ which they ascended for about a league,

²³ Puerto de la Trinidad.

²⁴ The footnote gives "sesenta varas," more properly rendered 60 yards, or 180 feet. The translator here has evidently sought to guard against what he deemed too great exaggeration in the text, but any one familiar with the trees of this region will at once recognize the reasonableness of the original statement.

²⁵ Undoubtedly reference is here made either to Little River, which enters the ocean about three miles to the south of Trinidad Bay, or to Mad River a few miles farther south.

noting that at this place there "were larger timber trees than we had before seen."²⁶ On account of having observed a large flock of wild pigeons at the mouth of this river it was given the name Rio de los Tortolos (the river of pigeons).²⁷

This discovery of Trinidad Bay, although of interest, was productive of no permanent results. Father Junipero Serra, president of the California missions, was particularly anxious that the king should follow up his claims to this territory by making settlements and founding establishments among the natives similar to those in the region farther south. By his great zeal he was able to inspire enthusiasm in the heart of Antonio Bucareli, the Viceroy of New Spain, who declared his willingness to cooperate with the missionaries by furnishing the necessary troops as soon as he could be assured that the establishments would be self-supporting. To this end Father Serra now turned his attention, but the untimely death of the Viceroy deprived him of a friend at court, and this most cherished ambition had to be abandoned.²⁸

Vancouver, 1792-93. In the month of April, 1792, the English explorer, Captain George Vancouver, having sailed from the Sandwich Islands, reached the California coast just south of Cape Mendocino. Several days were spent around the cape making soundings and preparing a sketch of the headland. The narrative says:²⁹

From Cape Mendocino the coast takes a direction N. 13 E.; along which we ranged at the distance of about two leagues. After passing the above islets,³⁰ the shores became strait and compact, not affording the smallest

²⁶ Some of the largest timber in the county has in recent years been taken out of this same locality.

²⁷ Other references to the discovery of Trinidad are to be found in Bancroft, *California*, I, 242; Eureka, *West Coast Signal*, Nov. 22, 1871.

²⁸ Palou, *Relacion historica de la vida . . . Junipero Serra*, 162, 170-172. Here he gives a letter from Bucareli to Serra, dated Jan. 20, 1776, the postscript of which reads, in translation, as follows:

The port of Trinidad discovered by Don Bruno Heceta invites us to found an establishment; and in order not to lose sight of this object, which is of so much importance to the spread of the gospel, we ought to strengthen [consolidar] these establishments, and it is to that end that I hope the fervent zeal of your highest Reverence may contribute. In order that we may be able to found an establishment in the most distant region now discovered, it is requisite that those "Reducciones" be self-supporting as regards their supplies, and to that end I hope that the zeal of the missionaries may be directed to sowing the fields and breeding cattle. The expense of maintaining troops as a guard, notwithstanding that it is a consideration, does not hinder me, except for the difficulty of transporting so many supplies from San Blas and the hazards due to navigation.

²⁹ Vancouver, *A voyage of discovery to the North Pacific Ocean, and round the world; in the years 1790, 1791, 1792, 1793, 1794 and 1795*, I, 200.

³⁰ Off Cape Fortunas.

shelter; and, although rising gradually from the water's edge to a moderate height only, yet the distant interior country was composed of mountains of great elevation; before which were presented a great variety of hills and dales, agreeably interspersed with woodland, and clear spots, as if in a state of cultivation; but we could discern neither houses, huts, smokes, nor other signs of its being inhabited. The coast we had passed this afternoon, seemed to be generally defended by a sandy beach; but the evening brought us to a country of a very different description, whose shores were composed of rocky precipices, with numberless small rocks and rocky islets extending about a mile into the sea: the most projecting part . . . obtained the name of Rocky Point.³¹

After having spent the winter in the islands, Vancouver again sailed for the North Pacific in March of 1793, and a second time approached the continent near the "promontories of Cape Mendocino."³² The weather was "very gloomy and unpleasant," and they were unable to make any observations on land until they had reached the latitude of Trinidad. Vancouver was now on the lookout for this port, since he had missed it the previous year, and probably the more anxious since a recent storm had retarded his passage, thus reducing his supply of fuel and water. Having succeeded in finding the port, three days were spent there while the necessary supplies were being secured. In the meantime a chart of the bay was drafted and the natives were studied. "In an excursion made by Mr. Menzies to the hill composing the projecting head land, that forms the northwest side of the bay, he found, agreeably with Senr Maurelli's description, the cross which the Spaniards had erected on their taking possession of the port; and though it was in a certain state of decay, it admitted of his copying the following inscription:

'CAROLUS III. DEI. G. HYSpanIARUM. REX.'

Although the wind was still adverse he again put to sea on the fifth of May, "without the least regret at quitting a station that I considered as a very unprotected and unsafe roadstead for shipping." In fact, he states that he would

³¹ Probably the point now called Patrick's Point, about six miles north of Trinidad Head.

³² Vancouver, *Voyage to the North Pacific Ocean*, II, 245.

call it merely a "nook; not regarding it as deserving either the name of a bay, or a cove . . . should a vessel part cables, or be driven from this anchorage, she must instantly be thrown on the rocks that lie close under her stern, where little else than inevitable destruction is to be expected."³³

The Lelia Byrd. The opening of the nineteenth century marks the beginning of a new period of exploration in this part of the northwest, for it was during this time that the region was visited both by sea and land by those adventurers of various nations who came to obtain the wealth of the fur-bearing animals. With these men, exploration was merely a by-product, sometimes of great importance to the later development of the country, but in the case of the Humboldt region it contributed little of real value to the period which was to follow.

In this period the first American vessel made its landing upon the Humboldt coast. This was the *Lelia Byrd*, under the command of William Shaler. She had sailed from Canton in February, 1804, and arrived off the mouth of the Columbia River the first of May. Not being able to cross the bar she proceeded down the coast in search of a port which could be more easily entered, and came to anchor in Trinidad Bay on the 11th. Preparation was made to obtain wood and water, and the ship's carpenter was sent on shore in search of timber for spars. These were soon found in great abundance, and the cutting of a larger spruce for a foremast was started at once. Trade was opened with the Indians who "appeared to be very civil," but they soon became more numerous and also more troublesome. The distribution of presents did much to restore harmony, but as their numbers were augmented by reinforcements from neighboring tribes conditions became so critical that all work on shore had to be done under the protection of the guns. Having secured the necessary supply of water and fuel and a number of spars the vessel departed on the 18th.³⁴

The O'Cain, 1806. Another American vessel which is destined to hold a position of great importance in Humboldt

³³ *Ibid.*, II, 239-249, and the atlas are the sources regarding this visit. See also Davidson, *Discovery of Humboldt Bay*; Bancroft, *California*, I, 517-518; and the *West Coast Signal*, Nov. 22, 1871.

³⁴ Shaler, *Journal of a voyage between China and the northwest coast of America, made in 1804*, in *Amer. Register*, III, 1808, 139-143; Bancroft, *California*, II, 21-22.

history is the *O'Cain*. This vessel, owned in part by the Winship brothers, appeared on the coast in 1803 and again in 1805, and is noted among other things for having inaugurated a new commercial adventure in the North Pacific. In 1805, after passage from Boston to the Sandwich Islands, Capt. Jonathan Winship, then commander of the *O'Cain*, made his way to New Archangel, where he induced Alexander Baranof, the chief director of the Russian-American Company, to furnish a number of Kadiak Indians with their *bidarkas* to go to California to hunt sea otter. The profits of the expedition were to be divided between Winship and the Russian-American Company.³⁵ Leaving Sitka the latter part of May they sailed for the California coast, and anchored to the north of Trinidad Bay on the tenth of June. An exploring party, under Capt. Winship, went on shore, and on returning reported the existence of a sound, which they had partly explored, and named "Washington Inlet."³⁶ Its shores were thickly populated with natives, while otter and seals were plentiful. The next day they followed down the coast and anchored in Trinidad Bay. The natives were found to be numerous, and soon an extensive trade was carried on, the Indians having a large supply of furs as well as a quantity of strawberries and raspberries.

As the days passed the number of natives increased until at one time they numbered about two hundred, and, as on the previous occasion, they began to show signs of hostility; during the last few days, therefore, trading was conducted on the beach under cover of the ship's guns. The narrative relates:

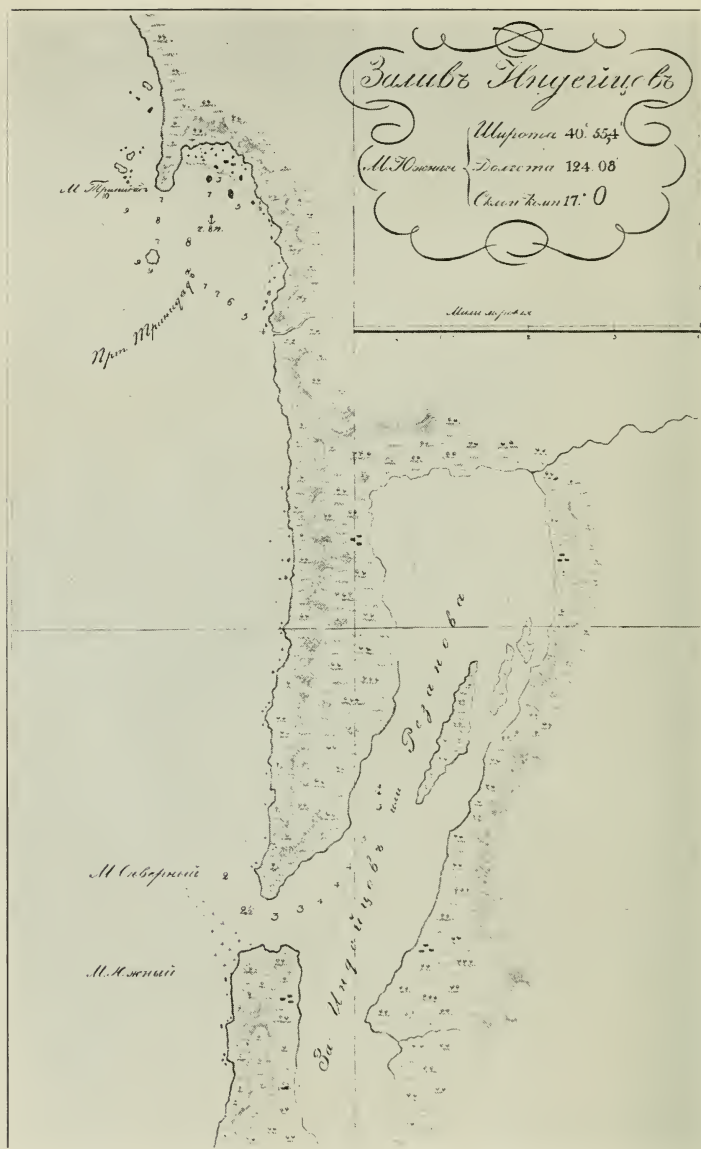
The ship remained here until the 22nd, when, having filled their water casks, and laid in a good supply of fish, all of which was performed under the protection of a strong guard, it was considered better to abandon the good hunting ground there, than to remain and fight the natives, and probably occasion the loss of many lives.³⁷

The next year, 1806, Winship again returned to this part of the coast and, according to report, was the first to discover and enter the waters of Humboldt Bay. According to the report of this expedition:

³⁵ Bancroft, *California*, II, 63; *Solid men of Boston in the northwest*, MS., 14.

³⁶ Big Lagoon, about eight miles north of Trinidad.

³⁷ *Solid men of Boston in the northwest*, MS., 16-18; Bancroft, *California*, II, 39.



About eight and a half miles from the port of Trinidad is found the entrance to the Bay of Indians, called the entrance of Resanof. According to the Colonial Documents of the Russian-American Company, it appears that it was discovered by citizens of the United States. In 1806 there was in it (on an American vessel), under command of Winship, a sea-otter party of Aleuts, under leadership of Slabodchikov, which was met by the Indians in a hostile fashion. This bay has not been carefully described, but it is known that it is of considerable size; and somewhat resembles the Bay of San Francisco, except that the entrance to it for vessels of large class is not convenient, and with strong southwest winds is even impossible for any kind of vessel. The depth of the entrance is two fathoms, and therefore the ocean waves break into surf.³⁸

Notwithstanding a few inaccuracies, this is clearly a description of Humboldt Bay and a study of the chart and subchart given in the atlas accompanying this account makes the identification positive.³⁹ The channel was nearly the same as that used at the present time, while the four Indian villages were located in the same places in which they were when the Americans began to settle on the bay fifty years later.

After the visit of the *O'Cain* we may presume that Humboldt Bay was more than once visited by vessels engaged in the fur trade, for the *O'Cain* itself was on the coast again in 1809, 1810, and 1811,⁴⁰ and other vessels were operating along this coast. There is, however, no positive record of any vessel entering Humboldt Bay from the time of Winship's visit in 1806 until its rediscovery by the Americans forty-four years later.⁴¹

Trinidad Bay, on the other hand, was visited by several of these vessels.⁴² Of these visits the best account is given us by the chief officer of the British schooner *Columbia*,

³⁸ Tebenkov, *Gidrograficeskia zamecania k atlasu*, 42. This is a Russian work published in St. Petersburg in 1852. The English translation of the title is as follows: "Hydrographic observations accompanying the atlas of the northwestern shores of America, the Aleutian islands, and some other places of the North Pacific Ocean, by Captain of the first rank Tebenkov. St. Petersburg, the printing house of the naval cadets corps. 1852." Davidson, *Discovery of Humboldt Bay*, reproduced in part in the *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 23, 1898; Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865.

³⁹ Tebenkov, *op. cit.*, chart XIII, with sub chart, a reproduction of which will be found opposite this page.

⁴⁰ Bancroft, *California*, II, 82.

⁴¹ *Infra*, 46-47.

⁴² Capt. Campbell in 1806, Bancroft, *California*, II, 40; and the *Mercury* and *Albatross* in 1810, *Solid men of Boston in the northwest*, MS., 51.

which spent some days in Trinidad Bay in 1817. His account reads:

We were driven fast to the southward [from Cape Orford] by the current; on the 24th a breeze sprang up, and we made sail for Port Trinidad, in latitude $41^{\circ} 3'$, longitude $123^{\circ} 54'$ west; hauled into a small sandy bay, where we moored, sheltered from all winds, a few ships' lengths from the shore, in nine fathoms sandy bottom. This bay is full of high rocks, which are always covered with birds, and round it are scattered many Indian villages. We had scarcely time to moor before we were surrounded with canoes; we triced our boarding nets up, and shut all our ports but one, at which the natives entered, keeping all the canoes on the starboard side; . . . We then commenced trading, and got a few land furs, which they brought off, for pieces of iron-hoop, cut to 6-inch lengths. They also brought us plenty of red deer and berries. In the afternoon, some women made their appearance: the people offered them blankets and axes, but nothing could tempt them to come on board. This is the only place on the coast where we could not induce the females to visit the ship. It appears that these natives have not had much communication with Europeans, as they do not know the use of firearms; nor have they any iron among them. Their daggers are made of a sort of flint-stone, and they are clothed in dressed leather apparel, prettily ornamented with shells. The women wear a very finely dressed leather petticoat, which reaches half way down the leg, and a square garment of the same thrown loosely over the shoulders. Their tongues and chins are tattooed; the former is quite black, the latter in stripes. Whether this is considered a mark of beauty or not I can not tell, but the women here are in general very handsome and well made. We saw a cross on shore, fixed there by the Spaniards many years ago, . . . After having bought all the furs here, on the 24th of July we weighed anchor, and, after encountering considerable difficulties, owing to the bad weather, succeeded in getting out. This was fortunate, as, had we gone on shore (there not being the least shelter in this part of the bay), the Indians were ready to receive and massacre us, for they are, without exception, the most savage tribes on all the coast.⁴³

Russian Designs. While discussing the operations of the Russian-American fur traders on this coast we must not fail

⁴³ Peter Corney, *Voyages in the northern Pacific*, 78-81.

to consider briefly the political designs of the Russians.⁴⁴ As mentioned in the previous chapter the Russians had begun to make settlements on the American coast as early as 1745, and from that time on they pushed gradually to the south. The great Russian-American Company, organized in 1799, put an end to the disorganized conditions due to the jealousies of the petty rival companies, and, in fact, became practically an independent part of the Russian Empire. The one great hindrance to the success of the company was the difficulty in securing adequate provisions, and this more than anything else had led Baranof, the chief official of the company, to tolerate the interference of the Americans in the monopoly of the fur trade.

In 1805-06 Alexander Rezanof, the Russian Imperial Chamberlain, made a visit to the Russian establishment at New Archangel and thence on to California, a visit which was of great importance to Russian affairs on this coast, since it influenced the government to take up two lines of action: the one to develop if possible trade directly with the Spanish settlements of California; the other, to found somewhere in the south a Russian settlement, which could serve as a base of supplies for the northern establishments. In accordance with the latter object the *Kadiak*, under the command of Kuskof, a trusted official of the company, was despatched to the south, ostensibly to hunt otter, but actually with further instructions to make a careful search for a favorable site for the proposed settlement. Leaving Sitka the latter part of October, 1808, he passed down the coast, making his first landing at Trinidad Bay. He found the supply of sea otter had been depleted, and for some reason the native village was deserted. Not being favorably impressed with this place as a location for the settlement he continued on to the south and came to anchor in Bodega Bay. Here several months were spent in exploration, in establishing friendly relations with the Indians, and in other ways preparing for the later occupation of the country. For some years the Russians flourished in their establishments at Fort Ross and Bodega, but Humboldt seems to have had no attraction

⁴⁴ Bancroft, *California*, II, 61-82.

for them; at any rate no record has thus far been discovered of their having been in this region, except as above noted.⁴⁵

With the decrease in the supply of sea otter the operations of the Russian-American fur traders along this coast ceased to be of much importance, and their place was taken in turn by the American and British trappers. These trappers operated mostly in the interior valleys, but occasionally transient parties found their way to the coast region. Their activities were not extensive, however, and the accounts which have come down to us are exceedingly meager and often contradictory.

Jedediah Smith, 1828. The first of these parties was under the leadership of Jedediah Smith, one of the first Americans to reach California by an overland route. In 1828, desiring to return East by a northern route and thinking he would find traveling easier near the coast, he turned west from the Sacramento Valley and struck the headwaters of Trinity River, which he followed to its junction with the Klamath, and thence went along the coast northward as far as the Umpquah River in Oregon. Here the expedition was almost entirely destroyed by the Indians. Smith and two of his men survived the attack and made their way to Fort Vancouver, the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company. Notwithstanding the fact that they represented a rival company and another nation, they were well received by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, and a party was immediately despatched to recover from the Indians the furs and the equipment.⁴⁶

The Hudson's Bay Company. Probably the real motive prompting this generous action of the company was the fact that here was offered an opportunity to follow the trail made by the Americans and thus discover a route to the regions farther south. McLeod, the agent of the company, succeeded in doing this, entering the Sacramento Valley in 1828. He trapped on the streams of the upper Sacra-

⁴⁵ In 1841 the Russian claims at Fort Ross were sold to John A. Sutter. This, according to report, included all the land lying along the coast from Point Reyes to Cape Mendocino, and inland to a distance of one league. Elliott, *History of Humboldt County, California*, 36. See *infra*, 230.

⁴⁶ Dale, *The Ashley-Smith explorations and the discovery of the central route to the Pacific, with original journals, 237 et seq.*, and map; Gibbs, in *Schoolcraft, Archives*, III, 136; Warner, *Reminiscences of early California*, MS., 25 et seq.; Wells, *History of Siskiyou County, California*, 20; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 81; Bancroft, *California*, III, 155, 159-160; *History of the northwest coast*, II, 450-452.

mento and returned to Oregon through the Shasta Mountains by a route which he opened. Simultaneously with the McLeod expedition another party under Ogden is said to have been despatched south along the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada, to discover, if possible, Smith's earlier trail into California and thus head off any efforts that might be made by the American trappers to forestall the operations of the Hudson's Bay Company in California after Smith had made his report at St. Louis. He found his way through the mountains in the fall of 1828, and spent several months trapping in the San Joaquin Valley, returning to Oregon the following year. The route taken by him on his return is the part of his trip which is of particular interest to us, for, according to a report, he "passed over the coast and up to Vancouver, by the route Smith had formerly traveled." This, however, is clearly contradicted by other authorities, one of whom says that "he left the Valley upon the trail made by McLeod," which, as we have seen, was through the Shasta Mountains.⁴⁷ In the same manner Wells tells of another trapper, Michel LaFrambois, who entered the valley in 1832 and returned "over the usual route along the coast."⁴⁸

Ewing Young, 1833. Ewing Young, another American trapper, is the next one reported to have used the coast route. We are told that "in January, 1833, he crossed the Sacramento River at the mouth of the Feather River and passing along the southern and western shore of the lake crossed the mountain and struck the shore of the ocean about seventy-five miles up the coast from Ross. He continued on up the coast searching with little success for rivers having beaver and in making fruitless efforts to recross the mountains until reaching near the Umpquah when he succeeded in getting over the mountain and fell upon that river which he followed up to its source."⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Warner, *Reminiscences*, MS., 29-33; Wells, *Siskiyou County*, 20; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 81. The statements of these writers are full of contradictions and are therefore apparently untrustworthy. They are given here because they are at present the best evidence obtainable.

⁴⁸ While much of this evidence is very unsatisfactory, it is unquestioned that La Frambois was acquainted with the coast region, since at a meeting in San Francisco in 1848, he spoke regarding the nature of this region and urged further exploration. *Infra*, 36, 37.

⁴⁹ Warner, *Reminiscences*, MS., 47-49.

Mofras, who visited California and Oregon in the early forties, refers to the region north of Fort Ross as that "part of California inhabited solely by Indians but traversed at times by the French-Canadian or American expeditions;" and on the map published in his atlas are shown two routes of travel—one by the interior valley, the other along the coast.⁵⁰ While none of this evidence is entirely satisfactory since in no case have we the narrative of those who themselves passed through the territory, it is probably safe to conclude that at various times there were expeditions passing within the limits of the region now known as Humboldt County.

That this district was visited during these years by parties who approached from the sea we can scarcely doubt, although on this point, as in the case of the land expeditions, there is no conclusive evidence. Stephen H. Meek, a veteran trapper on the Pacific coast, gives an account of an expedition of the Hudson's Bay Company down the coast in the year 1830 or 1831. He writes in reference to the discovery of Humboldt Bay:

The first explorations along that coast, and within the bay itself, was made by Mr. William G. Ray, a factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was sent down the coast from Vancouver to attempt the establishment of one or more stations on the coast, about the year 1830 or 1831. He entered this bay (being under the impression that it was Drake's Bay), passing close under the bluff called Table Bluff, and discovered what he named Clearwater Bay, on account of the purity of its waters. On landing he found the Indians so hostile that no permanent station was established at that time, whereupon he sailed farther south and established a post at Drake's Bay.⁵¹

Another vessel of the Hudson's Bay Company, the schooner *Cadborough*, under command of Capt. Brotchie, is reported to have made a careful examination of the Klamath River in 1836 and to have explored many other parts of the coast in the interest of the company.⁵² Mofras would seem to convey also the impression that he himself visited Trinidad

⁵⁰ Mofras, *Exploration du territoire de l'Oregon, des Californies et de la mer Vermeille, exécutée pendant les années 1840, 1841 et 1842*, II, 35 and his atlas.

⁵¹ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 129. Trinidad bay seems more probable.

⁵² Mofras, *Exploration*, II, 38.

Bay on his tour of exploration in 1841.⁵³ During these years three naval exploring expeditions were made along the Pacific coast—Belcher and Kellett of the Royal Navy in 1837 and 1846, and Wilkes of the United States Navy in 1841—but none of them made explorations on the California coast north of Cape Mendocino.⁵⁴

⁵³ *Ibid.*, II, 36-37. Here Mofras gives a brief description of the bay, some of the details of which would seem to indicate personal observation, but there is nothing to prove a very careful examination or even a landing. On the other hand, the carefully engraved chart of the bay given in his atlas (Plate 15) is found on comparison to be an almost exact reproduction of Vancouver's chart (1795) mentioned on page 26. His passage to the north was made on the *Cowlitz*, under command of Capt. Brothie of the Hudson's Bay Company. Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States exploring expedition*, V, 157.

⁵⁴ Davidson, *Discovery of Humboldt Bay*, 14.

CHAPTER III

THE REDISCOVERY OF TRINIDAD AND HUMBOLDT BAYS, 1849-1850

When it was certain that California was to be ceded to the United States there was a new interest in the exploration of the more remote parts of the state, particularly in the coast region north of San Francisco Bay, of which so little had been known since the Americans began to settle in the state. Here extended a great stretch of country, from the former Russian settlements near Bodega Bay to the Umpquah River in Oregon, which still remained practically an unknown land. Cape Mendocino was known to all mariners sailing these waters, and the old Spanish maps indicated Trinidad Bay as located in this section, but just where it was, or what its value as a port might be, or the nature of the country lying around it—all this was still a mystery.

As evidence of the revival in San Francisco of interest in exploration there is to be found in the issue of the *California Star* of March 25, 1848, this notice:¹

EXPLORING EXPEDITION

A Public Meeting will be held in the School House on Monday Evening next at early candle light, for the purpose of adopting means to raise and fit out a party to explore the region of Trinidad Bay; leaving this place on the first of April next. An interest has been felt for the past two years relative to this imperfectly known section of California. It is believed the general wish to procure reliable information from this quarter will induce a large attendance.

Many citizens.

In accordance with this notice a meeting was held on March 27. The object of the meeting was set forth by Samuel Brannan, who suggested that if the information gained should be sufficiently favorable he would propose fitting out an expedition to explore this country either by

¹ Also see San Francisco, *California Star*, Feb. 22, 1847, which announced the formation of a company to explore the country around Trinidad Bay.

land or by water. Several speakers followed representing the many "agricultural and other advantages" of the region. As a result a committee was named to investigate and to report at a future meeting.² Unfortunately for the success of the ideas proposed at this meeting, the gold excitement became a mania at that time. All other interests immediately became secondary, and, as was to be expected, in this new excitement, Trinidad Bay was temporarily forgotten.

However, although the gold excitement diverted attention from Trinidad for a time, it was later to lead directly to its rediscovery and occupation, for with the operation of the mines on the headwaters of the Trinity River, it was felt imperative that somewhere on the north coast a port be found which could serve as a base of supplies for that district. As early as 1845 Major P. B. Reading left Sutter's Fort with a party of men to trap on the streams of northern California. Crossing over the divide on the west side of the Sacramento River, he came upon the headwaters of a river which he named the "Trinity," believing that its waters emptied into Trinidad Bay. In July, 1848, he was again upon the river, and as a result of two days' prospecting found the river bars to be "rich in gold," which he worked with the aid of Indian labor.³ But soon the news of gold deposits on the Trinity began to divert to this region the "emigrants" who were coming into California by the northern trails, so that by 1849 the population of the Trinity River district had passed all bounds, with the result that when the rains caused the suspension of operations in the river beds, it seemed probable that the supply of provisions would prove inadequate to carry the men through the winter.

The Josiah Gregg Expedition. Among the men attracted by the precious metal was one whose scientific and literary attainments placed him above the level of the average goldseeker. This was Dr. Josiah Gregg, formerly of the State of Missouri.⁴ Although Dr. Gregg had joined the rush to the gold fields, he had also gone prepared to do scientific work if opportunity offered, so it is but natural

² *California Star*, Apr. 1, 1848.

³ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 82.

⁴ Dr. Josiah Gregg is not unknown to the student of the history of our southwest, on account of his popular book, *Commerce of the prairies*. While still a young man, Gregg was forced by ill health to leave his home in Missouri and seek the life of the frontier. In 1831 he joined the spring caravan as it went west on the Santa Fe trail. For the next nine years

that we should find him the leader in organizing a party of men whose object was the exploration of the region to the west, thereby opening up a trail to the coast. This, according to the report of the Indians, was but an eight days' journey; furthermore, they were assured that there was to be found there "a large and beautiful bay, surrounded by fine and extensive prairie lands."⁵

The party as first organized consisted of twenty-four men; but when the storms, which had been most severe during the month of October, did not abate as the time for departure approached, the number was reduced to eight of the most determined ones.⁶ These men, notwithstanding the fact that even the Indian guides now refused to go, were only the more resolute in their determination; and so, on the fifth of November, with rations for about ten days, they set out over the mountains in the direction indicated by the Indians, little imagining the hardship and suffering they were to undergo on the way. They had not proceeded far before they began to realize something of the difficulty of the task they had undertaken, for when they had worked their way slowly through the deep snow to the summit of

he spent most of his time in northern Mexico, and became one of the proprietors in the Santa Fe trade.

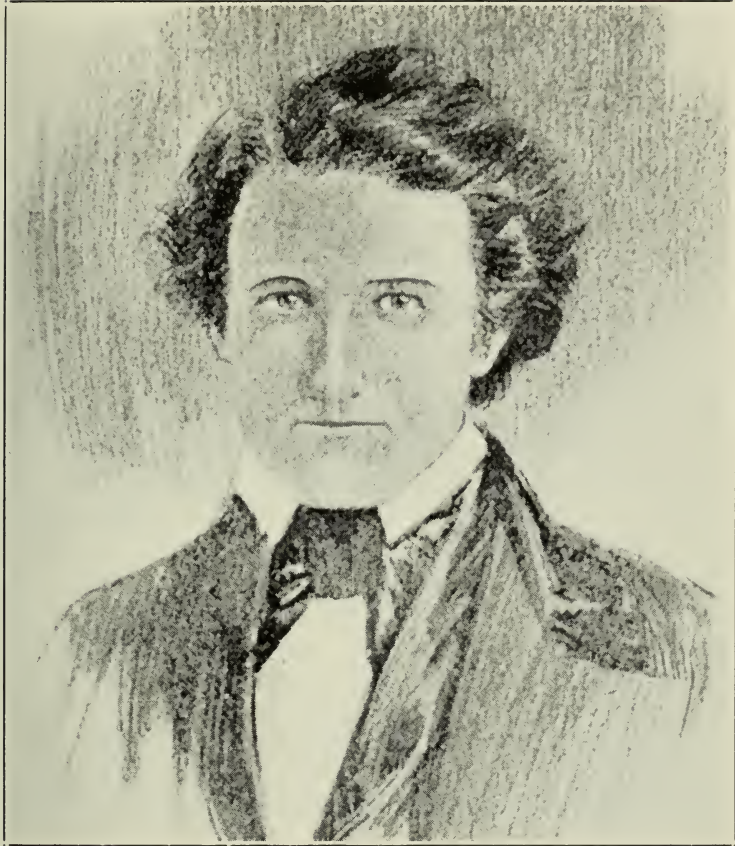
Even on the frontier his early scientific training did not desert him, for throughout it all he kept a careful journal and made detailed and accurate observations which were later (1844) given to the world in his *Commerce of the prairies*, which in a short time became a very popular book, passing through no less than six editions. Nor have later years tended to detract from his earlier honor, for, as time advances, his careful scientific observations and copious notes are being valued more and more as a real picture of our southwest as it was in the early half of the century.

When the Mexican War broke out Gregg was again called to the frontier as a newspaper correspondent, for which his literary ability and knowledge of the country so ably fitted him. At the first news of the gold excitement in California Dr. Gregg joined with the emigrants, and thus it is we find him on the headwaters of the Trinity in the fall of 1849.

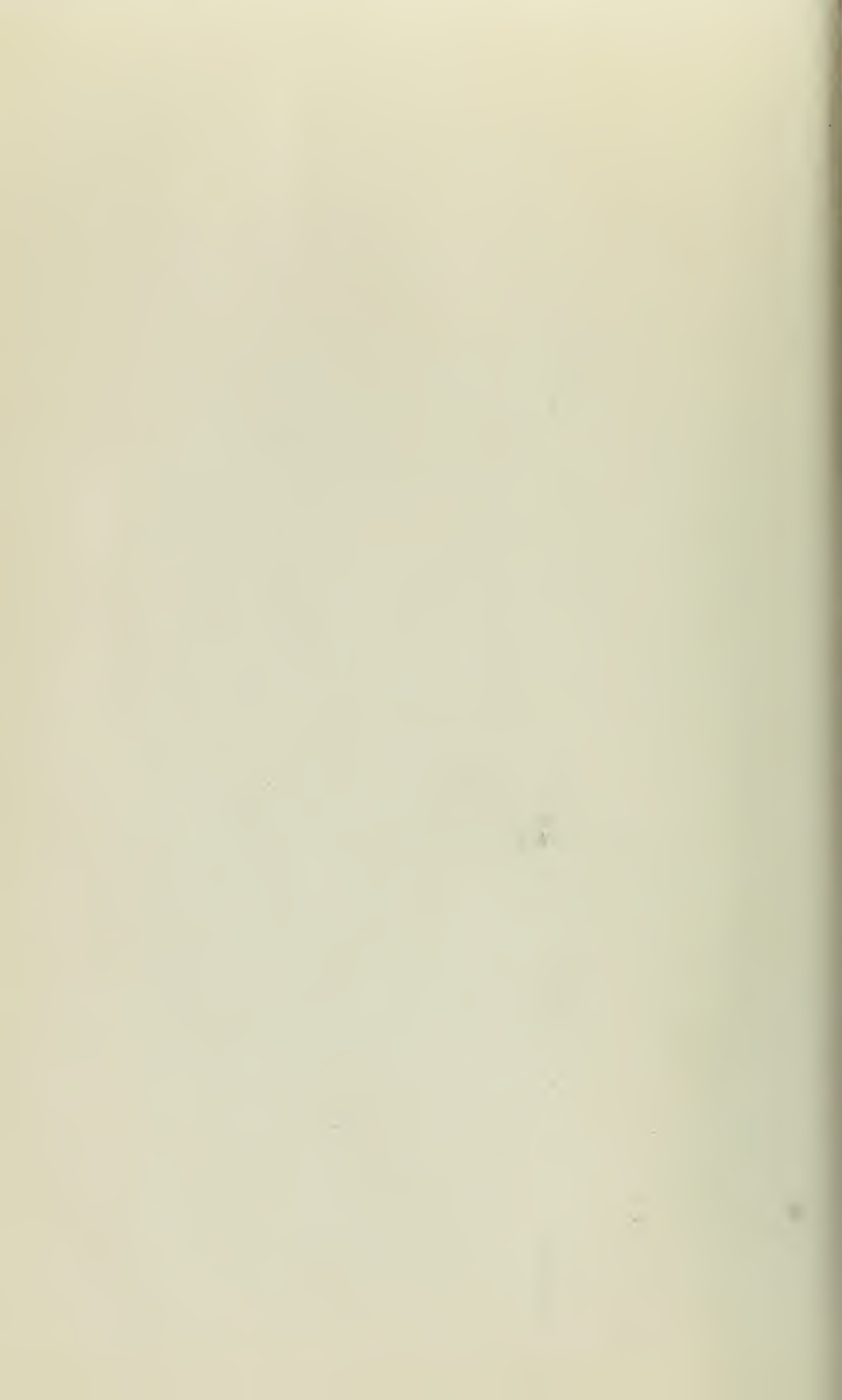
See note in Connelley, William E., *Doniphan's Expedition* (Kansas City, 1907), 162 *et seq.* for a statement of the life of Gregg up to this time. Thwaites, *Early western travels*, XIX, also has a very brief statement. Both of these writers failed to get the interesting facts here given in reference to the last days of his life. See also Coy, "Last expedition of Josiah Gregg" in *The Southwestern Historical Quarterly*, July, 1916, and in *The Grizzly Bear Magazine*, July, 1916, and Coy, *The Great Trek*, ch. II.

⁵ The source of information on this expedition is a narrative by L. K. Wood, one of the party. It was printed in pamphlet form by his son from earlier editions of the Humboldt papers. It was originally published in the *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 26, 1856, *et seq.*, and again in the same paper Feb. 7, 1863, *et seq.*; in the *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 20, 1873, *et seq.*; it is given in full in Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 83-95; Van Dyke, *Statement of recollections on matters connected with early years of California and Oregon, 1849-1863*, MS., in the Bancroft Collection, gives it nearly as written; while Bledsoe, *Indian wars of the Northwest*, gives a paraphrase of the original, and is also followed by Hittell, *California*, 111, 817-832. It has also been reprinted in Kentucky State Historical Society, *Register*, VI, 19-32.

⁶ The names of the party were Dr. Josiah Gregg, captain; Lewis K. Wood, of Kentucky; Thomas Sebring, of Illinois; David A. Buck, of New York; J. B. Truesdell, of Oregon; Chas. C. Southard, of Boston; Isaac Wilson, of Missouri; and a Mr. Van Duzen.



DR. JOSIAH GREGG, DISCOVERER OF HUMBOLDT BAY



the mountain they looked toward the west only to see innumerable ranges of mountains piling up before them. But having once made the venture they were only the more firmly resolved to carry it to completion.

On the evening of the fifth day a welcome sound like that of ocean surf met their ears, and early the next morning one of their number was despatched ahead to investigate. He returned with sand which contained rich deposits of gold, but reported that the sound was only that of a rushing mountain stream,⁷ which they now followed to its junction with the main river. They deliberated on the advisability of following along the river to the ocean, but the Indians of a rancheria near at hand warned them against that course on account of numerous bands of Indians who would oppose their progress in that direction, while to turn directly west across the mountains would lead them nearer their goal.

From the Indians they had been able to secure a variation in their diet by an exchange of venison for smoked salmon, yet on the second day from the Indian village their supply of provisions became entirely exhausted and they were eventually reduced to the point of dividing and consuming the soured paste that had formed on the inside of the flour sacks when these had been saturated by the rains. Space does not permit a full account of, nor could our minds comprehend the suffering these men underwent as they threaded their way through what appeared to be impassable mountains. Many days were spent without food, for in places even game was scarce, and often their animals had no other food than the leaves of the trees that were cut down for their use. Several times the party halted to consider the question of turning back, but each time the decision was to move forward, for they believed that, once having passed the mountains, they would soon reach the ocean, or at any rate find their progress much easier. But here again they were doomed to disappointment, for they were to pass from the rugged mountains into the labyrinth of a primeval forest. The narrative reads:

Through this forest we could not travel to exceed two miles a day. The reason of this was the immense quantity of fallen timber that lay upon the ground in

⁷ The South Fork of the Trinity.

every conceivable shape and direction, and in very many instances one piled upon another so that the only alternative left us was literally to cut our way through. . . . We were obliged, therefore, constantly to keep two men ahead with axes, who, as occasion required, would chop into and slab off sufficient to construct a sort of platform by means of which the animals were driven upon the log and forced to jump off on the opposite side.

At last, after more than four weeks of travel, their "ears were greeted with the welcome sound of the surf rolling and beating upon the sea shore." The next morning two of the number proposed to go to the coast in advance of the party. This they did, returning on the evening of the same day, "bringing the glad tidings that they had reached the sea shore, and that it was not more than six miles distant." In spite of the fact that they were now so near they still toiled "three long, weary days" before they came out into the open country in view of the ocean.

They had reached the coast just south of the stream now called Little River. They first turned toward the north, following along the coast, but after traveling some twelve miles and finding their way blocked by Big Lagoon, which lay between the dense forest and the ocean, they decided to turn south again, this time stopping to examine a projecting headland, which they named "Gregg's Point," in deference to their leader.⁸ Here Dr. Gregg determined the latitude and carved it upon the trunk of a tree near at hand.⁹

These scientific observations of the leader came to be a source of annoyance to the other members of the party, and as he still persisted in making them in spite of the toil and hardship they endured he was subjected to much abuse. Unfortunately, this lack of harmony in the exploring party has been indelibly stamped on the map of the region in the name of one of its most important streams, for they had not gone far along the coast to the south until they came to a

⁸ This point was Trinidad Head on Trinidad Bay; unfortunately the name of Gregg was not permitted to remain upon the map of this region.

⁹ *Alta California*, Apr. 8, 1850; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 96. In March of 1850 the crew of the *Cameo* found this inscription on a tree near the head of the bay:

"Lat. 41°, 3' 32"
Barometer 29° 86'
Ther. Fah. 48° at 12 M.
Dec. 7, 1849. J. Gregg."

stream which gave the appearance of being a large river, and without doubt suitable for navigation. One of the company relates:

The Doctor wished to ascertain the latitude of the mouth of the river, in order hereafter to know where it was. This was, of course, opposed by the rest of the company. Regardless of this opposition, he proceeded to take his observation. We were, however, equally obstinate in adhering to the determination of proceeding without delay. Thus decided, our animals were speedily crossed over, and our blankets and ourselves placed in canoes—which we had procured from the Indians for this purpose—ready to cross. As the canoes were about pushing off, the Doctor, as if convinced that we would carry our determination into effect, and he be left behind, hastily caught up his instruments and ran for the canoe, to reach which, however, he was compelled to wade several steps in the water. His cup of wrath was now filled to the brim; but he remained silent until the opposite shore was gained, when he opened upon us a perfect battery of the most withering and violent abuse. Several times during the ebullition of the old man's passion he indulged in such insulting language and comparisons, that some of the party, at best not any too amiable in their disposition, came very near inflicting upon him summary punishment by consigning him, instruments and all, to this beautiful river. Fortunately for the old gentleman, pacific councils prevailed, and we were soon ready and off again. This stream, in commemoration of the difficulty I have just related, we called Mad River.

The party now continued along the ocean beach, little mindful of the object of their search, but active in speculation upon the chances of being able to make their way once more to a land of civilization. When night came they made camp where they were, and for the first time were confronted with a scarcity of water. Consequently two of the number were sent in search of this necessary article. One of the men, David A. Buck, returned with a kettleful of water which was found to have a brackish taste, and on being asked where he had obtained it, he replied laconically, "about a mile from here." Other inquiries brought the reply, "I dipped it out of a bay of smooth water," but beyond that he had nothing to say. Early the next morning

all the party were ready to move, and shortly afterward camp was pitched on the shore of a bay,¹⁰ which was named by them Trinity Bay, since they believed it to be the bay shown on the Spanish maps.¹¹

From the Indians they learned that they would be unable to follow down the beach on account of the entrance to the bay, which as they said, "was deeper than the trees growing on the peninsula were tall." Buck investigated and found the Indians had represented conditions accurately, so the route was directed around the north portion of the bay. Thus Christmas Day found the party in camp on a plateau at the head of the bay, the site of the present city of Arcata, their dinner being furnished from a band of elk which was found near camp the evening before. The next day the party followed an Indian trail around the bay and camped at a point of land near a village of Indians,¹² who appear to have been very friendly, supplying the Americans with a quantity of clams, upon which, we are assured, they "feasted sumptuously." They camped here one day only and then again turned their faces toward the south.

It had been our intention at the outset, if we succeeded in discovering the bay, and provided the surrounding country was adapted to agricultural purposes, and was sufficiently extensive, to locate claims for ourselves, and lay out a town; but the deplorable condition in which we now found ourselves, reduced in strength, health impaired, our ammunition nearly exhausted—upon which we were entirely dependent, as well for the little food we could obtain as for our defense and protection—and destitute of either farming or mechanical implements, induced us to abandon such intention, at least for the present, and use all possible dispatch in making our way to the settlements.

The third day after leaving the bay, the party came to another river, which, on account of the large number of eels they obtained from the Indians, was called Eel River. The river was now very high on account of recent storms, but canoes were secured from the Indians and a crossing made at a point just below the mouth of a branch stream, which they

¹⁰ This discovery was made on the evening of Dec. 20, 1849, somewhere in the vicinity of Fairhaven. The party camped on the bay about opposite Bucksport.

¹¹ This name was not retained, for the later expeditions discovered the real Trinidad Bay, and this bay became known as Humboldt Bay. *Infra*, 46-47.

¹² Humboldt or Buhne's Point.

named Van Duzen, in honor of one of the party. Here a difference of opinion arose as to the most advantageous route to pursue, some urging that they should follow down the coast, the others, that by following up this river they could more easily cross the mountains and reach the settlements farther south. No amount of argument produced harmony, so the different proponents took their respective routes.

L. K. Wood with three others followed up the river, while Gregg and the remainder of the party went south toward the coast. The river party made good progress for a few days, but soon hardship again overtook them. Fortunately, they had kept the hide of a small deer which they had killed, for we are told that this and a few buckeyes were all they had to sustain life; "the former we cut up and boiled in water, and afterwards drank the water in which it had been boiled, and chewed the hide." In an encounter with a wounded grizzly Wood was rendered a cripple for life, only narrowly escaping death, and it was with the greatest physical torture that he was able to continue with the expedition. After continuous hardships these men succeeded in reaching the settlements in Sonoma County on February 17, 1850.

The party which attempted to follow the coast was less fortunate. On account of the snow on the high ridges, and the great number of gulches and ravines their progress was so impeded that they decided to turn to the east and work their way across the mountains into the Sacramento Valley. Their supply of ammunition became exhausted, and starvation threatened the whole party; and for the leader of the expedition, notwithstanding a life upon the frontier, this experience proved too severe. One of the party relates:

Dr. Gregg continued to grow weaker, from the time of our separation, until, one day, he fell from his horse and died in a few hours without speaking—died from starvation—he had had no meat for several days, had been living entirely upon acorns and herbs.

His death occurred in the vicinity of Clear Lake,¹³ where, to borrow his own expression, he was "buried according to the custom of the prairies." "These funerals," he explains,

¹³ *Alta California*, Mar. 7, 1850. Gibbs, in *Schoolcraft, Archives*, III, 131.

"are usually performed in a very summary manner. A grave is dug in a convenient spot, and the corpse, with no other shroud than its own clothes, and only a blanket for a coffin, is consigned to the earth. The grave is then usually filled up with stones or poles, as a safe-guard against the voracious wolves of the prairies."¹⁴ The other members of the party made their way across the mountains, reaching the Sacramento Valley soon after the Wood party had arrived at the Sonoma settlements.

Trinidad Bay Rediscovered by Sea. While the party led by Josiah Gregg was working its way toward the coast through the mountains and forests, another expedition from the Trinity mines was seeking the same end by means of the ocean route. Leaving the mines in November, 1849, they went to San Francisco, whence, having chartered the *Cameo*, they made a voyage up the coast in December of that year. This attempt was without success.¹⁵ Very early in the spring other vessels took up the search, and with the spread of the news that the bay had actually been discovered by the land party interest in the region became most acute. The San Francisco papers gave much space to accounts of the various proposed expeditions and freely commented upon "the certainty of mineral wealth abounding in the region of Trinidad,"¹⁶ while even among the advertisements Trinidad held a prominent place.¹⁷

During February, 1850, two vessels had sailed from San Francisco in an unsuccessful attempt to find this port, and early in March the *Cameo* again took up the search, to be followed during the month by not less than eleven other vessels.¹⁸ On the 16th the *Cameo* was off the coast near Trinidad Head and landed a party in one of her ship's boats, in order that they might examine the coast more closely. In the meantime, on account of bad weather the vessel was forced to put to sea, and made her way northward, exploring the coast around Point St. George and the

¹⁴ These words, which so accurately describe the burial of Gregg, are taken from his *Commerce of the prairies*, I, 27, with note.

¹⁵ *Alta California*, Apr. 1, 1850. Elliott et al.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Mar. 8, 1850.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Mar. 8, 19, Apr. 13.

¹⁸ These were the *Arabian*, *Paragon*, *California*, *Laura Virginia*, *Galindo*, *Isabel*, *James M. Ryerson*, *Mallory*, *Ariel*, *Whiting* and the *General Morgan*. *Alta California*, March, 1850.

mouth of the Klamath River.¹⁹ The party which had been sent ashore had examined the coast, and on rounding the point discovered the elusive Trinidad Bay of the Spanish navigators. Some days later the *California* and the *Laura Virginia* appeared off shore and were piloted into the bay by members of the *Cameo* party, who were now nearly famished for lack of food. The *California* soon returned to San Francisco carrying the report of the success of the expedition.²⁰

The Laura Virginia Expedition. Among the vessels engaged in these explorations the one most worthy of being remembered was the schooner *Laura Virginia*.²¹ She had recently come around the Horn from Atlantic waters, where she had at one time been engaged in the slave trade. She was commanded by Lieut. Douglas Ottinger, at that time on a furlough from the United States Revenue Cutter *Frolic*. The real authority rested, however, with the members of the party, who came to be known as the "Laura Virginia Association."

The expedition cleared from San Francisco on the 20th of March.²² During the first part of the voyage the coast line was obscured by a high fog, which continued until the vessel was off Point Gorda, below Cape Mendocino. For a distance north of this cape the weather was clear, giving them a good view of the beautiful Eel River Valley.²³ Sailing on to the north they passed Table Bluff, called by them Ridge Point, and from the masthead were able to see, beyond the sand-hills, a strip of water which gave the appearance of being "a large bay," but at that time they were unable to discover any entrance.²⁴

¹⁹ A part of the crew in a whale-boat worked their way down the coast as far as Eel River, which they entered, believing it to be the Trinity River. Some time later they piloted in the *James M. Ryerson*, which was the first vessel to navigate Eel River. *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 7, 1857; Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*.

²⁰ *Alta California*, Apr. 1, 1850.

²¹ Howard's account, in Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 98-101. Other accounts of this expedition are: Ottinger's report, also in Elliott; La Motte, *Statement*, a manuscript in the Bancroft Collection; Bledsoe, *Indian Wars*, 107-125, has some material in addition to the Howard account which he follows closely; Davidson, *Discovery of Humboldt Bay*, claims to have information from one of the party.

²² *Alta California*, Mar. 21, 1850.

²³ Ottinger's report in Elliott also followed by Bledsoe would seem to indicate that an attempt was made to effect an entrance at this time. This was, however, at a later date. *Infra*, 47, n. 29.

²⁴ Both Ottinger and La Motte make this statement. That they should not see the entrance is not unreasonable on account of its peculiar formation. See Averell, *Statement of recollections*, MS., 1. Davidson gives the date, March 26th.

After having put into the recently discovered Trinidad Bay, they were once more enveloped in a fog bank, and so decided to sail on farther to the north. They now proceeded up the coast as far as Point St. George, and thence south again, exploring the mouth of the Klamath River and Redwood Creek on their return. Again arriving at Trinidad, on the fourth of April, a land party under command of E. H. Howard was despatched south along the coast to ascertain the truth regarding the supposed bay seen on the way north. The vessel was to return for them at the end of ten days if they had not signaled her before that time.

The land party had not traveled many hours before its advance was blocked by the waters of Mad River. On the opposite side was a large Indian rancheria, and soon the river bank was lined with natives. When they were given to understand that the object of the strangers was peaceful, canoes were sent out and the party ferried across. Not feeling entirely secure among so many curious, if not treacherous, savages the whites brought into service their compass and firearms to mystify the natives and otherwise impress upon them the superior powers of the white man. A few presents were left with the leading Indians, and the party proceeded on down the beach.

Late in the afternoon a shout from the men in advance made known to the rest of the party that the entrance to the bay had been discovered. Their first impulse was to sample the water; although brackish, they could not determine whether it was that of a river or bay, but from the appearance of the shore line they decided it must be the former.²⁵ The night was spent in camp near the present Life Saving Station, and the following day they returned to Trinidad.

The *Laura Virginia* appeared in the harbor the next day after their return, and upon hearing the favorable report from the land party, all were anxious to attempt an entrance to what was now known to be a bay. Consequently, on the ninth of April, the vessel was headed for the entrance. It was decided to send in a small boat, in order to secure more

²⁵ A heavy fog obscured the south branch of the bay from their view. Howard, in Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 98-101.

definite information regarding the channel, before the larger vessel was exposed to the dangers attending a crossing. This task was assigned to H. H. Buhne, the second officer of the vessel, who succeeded not only in making the entrance, but in repeating the performance later the same day with two of the ship's boats loaded with passengers and supplies. A temporary camp was made on the north beach and the following morning all moved over to the high point of land lying opposite the entrance. On April 14th the *Laura Virginia* again appeared off the entrance and was herself piloted into the new body of water, which in the meantime had been named Humboldt Bay.²⁶ The name was applied in honor of Alexander von Humboldt, the distinguished German scientist whose writings on Spanish America had attracted wide attention.

Explorations Under Brannan. Meanwhile another exploring party was traversing the same territory, some members of which later laid claim to the prior discovery of Humboldt Bay.²⁷ This was an expedition sailing in the *General Morgan*, organized by Samuel Brannan, whose earlier interests in this region we have already noted.²⁸ On the fifth of April this vessel anchored off the mouth of Eel River. The following day the bar was sounded, and two boats, one in charge of Samuel Brannan, the other under his brother John Brannan, the commander of the vessel, succeeded in entering the river. A boat of the *Laura Virginia* in attempting to follow their example was capsized and one of its men drowned.²⁹

We are told that at this time the river bar was found to be covered by fifteen feet of water and soundings within showed thirty feet; and that having explored the different branches of the stream for ten miles or more from the mouth, they judged it to be a navigable waterway, and gave it the name of Brannan River. Upon returning to the mouth of the

²⁶ The dates as well as other details connected with the entering of the bay by the *Laura Virginia* are very much confused in the various accounts. I have taken April 9 as the date for Buhne's first entrance, as that agrees with the contemporaneous report of Ottinger. Bledsoe also takes this date, and gives April 14 as the time when the *Laura Virginia* entered the bay; La Motte places the latter on the thirteenth, while Howard gives April 9; Davidson places the first on April 13 and the latter four or five days later; and Doolittle's map gives it on April 20.

²⁷ Letter of J. T. Young in the *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 13, 1873; and Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, also based on the word of Young. The best account of this expedition is given in *Alta California*, Apr. 24, 1850.

²⁸ *Ante*, 36-37.

²⁹ *Alta California*, Apr. 24, 1850. Some accounts place this at an earlier time. *Infra*, 45, n. 23.

river the surf was found to be too high to permit a crossing, so they directed their course through the slough to the north, and, hauling their boats past a high bluff, called by them "Brannan Bluff," they entered the waters of a bay which they named "Mendocino Bay."³⁰ Camp was made among the sand hills of the south spit and some time was spent in exploring and preparing a chart of the new body of water. They then rowed to the head of the bay, where they left their boats, and made their way overland to Trinidad, arriving there about the 12th of April in a much exhausted condition. Here they reported their discovery and were well received by the new settlers, who invited them to join in the building of the town which was then being laid out. But trouble soon arose regarding the division of the land, and Brannan and his party departed to San Francisco.³¹ Some, however, returned the next month and took part in the founding of Eureka on Humboldt Bay.³²

³⁰ These were, of course, Table Bluff and Humboldt Bay. This must have been after the land party led by Howard had discovered the entrance to the bay, but before Buhne with the *Laura Virginia* had succeeded in effecting an entrance.

³¹ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 101.

³² *Infra*, 61-62.





SURVEY OF TRINIDAD HARBOR, 1874

CHAPTER IV

TOWNSITES AND PIONEER REALTORS, 1850-1856

Since the chief object of the exploring expeditions along the coast had been to discover a seaport which would afford a shorter route to the northern mines and serve as a depot for supplies, it is but natural that among the first things accomplished after the discovery of favorable sites should be the establishment of towns. A Sacramento correspondent of the *Alta California* expressed very succinctly the spirit of the times when he predicted, "Prosperous towns will soon be springing up, speculation will be rife and the foremost in the field will reap a rich reward."¹

Trinidad. Trinidad Bay, having been so long an object of search and being the first place discovered, was very naturally the first site selected for the new metropolis. On April 8, 1850, not many days after the first of the vessels had anchored in the bay, Capt. Robert A. Parker, with a party of men arrived in the schooner *James R. Whiting*. These men immediately proceeded to survey a quarter-section of land, then after laying out streets and blocks they erected temporary buildings upon it and otherwise set forth their claim to the location as a town site.² They were shortly joined by another party under Capt. Warner of the *Isabel*. The town having been laid out, an election was held on the 13th of April for the purpose of organizing a government. At this election it is claimed there were one hundred and forty votes cast.³

During the summer the population of Trinidad increased rapidly. After having taken legal possession of the lands, promoters of the place turned their attention immediately to opening up communication with the mines. By the last of June they were able to announce that this trail was open

¹ *Alta California*, Apr. 2, 1850.

² The advertisement of the preemption notice giving metes and bounds appears in the *Alta California*, Apr. 18, 1850; also recorded in the archives of County Recorder, *Records of Trinidad, Book A of Deeds*, 4. The date of the survey was Apr. 9, 1850.

³ Letter of Capt. Warner in *Alta California*, Apr. 17, 1850; Wells, *Siskiyou County*, 57; and Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 101-102.

and to bid for the traffic to the gold regions.⁴ By the first of July Trinidad claimed a population of three hundred, and consisted of about one hundred habitations, counting houses and tents, of which there were about an equal number.⁵ Speculation in real estate ran high, and the sums named in the exchange of lots appear to the reader of the present time as enormous.⁶

Notwithstanding the rapid growth of the place during the early months of its existence, Trinidad was soon to become the center of a boom which was to increase its population to a point never afterward attained. This was the Gold Bluffs excitement. During the summer of 1850 miners in going from Trinidad to the Klamath had discovered gold in the sands of the beach but had given it little attention.⁷ In the fall, however, other parties began operations, and very quickly reports of the great wealth of the sands reached San Francisco, where the excitement became intense. In December, the Pacific Mining Company was organized, with a capital of \$150,000, for the purpose of developing these deposits, and the *Chesapeake* was chartered to convey the party to the gold region. In January the vessel returned with reports which appeared fully to confirm the earlier accounts, and the most extraordinary claims were now made for the new gold region, an example of which is given in the following extract from one of the leading San Francisco papers:⁸

The sands of this beach are mixed with gold to an extent almost beyond belief . . . Mr. Collins, the Secretary of the Pacific Mining Company, measured a patch of gold and sand and estimated that it will yield to each member of the company the snug little sum of forty-three million dollars, and this estimate is formed on a calculation that the sand holds out to be one-tenth as rich as observation warrants them in supposing.

The effect of such reports upon the mining population of the state can readily be imagined. Shiploads of excited

⁴ *Alta California*, July 1, 1850.

⁵ *Ibid.*, July 3, 7, 1850; Jan. 28, 1851.

⁶ For example, an examination of the early deed book of Trinidad shows that one of its speculators, G. F. Lemon, during the first five months of the town's existence disposed of 1 lands in Trinidad for which he was to receive sums amounting to \$29,250. Archives County Recorder, *Records of Trinidad, Book A of Deeds*.

⁷ *Alta California*, Aug. 20, 1850; Wells, *Siskiyou County*, 62-63; and Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 105.

⁸ *Alta California*, Jan. 9, 1851; Wells, *Siskiyou County*, 63.

miners left San Francisco for Trinidad, all anxious to be among the first to stake out claims in the wonderful sands.⁹ By February, 1851, the population of Trinidad had increased manyfold, and it began to aspire to the honor of being the county seat of Trinity County, which was then in process of organization.¹⁰

Unfortunately the sands of Gold Bluffs did not come up to the representation regarding them; while much gold was to be found there, it existed in such fine particles that no process could be devised to separate it from the sand.¹¹ As soon as this became known Trinidad's short period of preeminence was past, for her population quickly disappeared. For some time the place maintained its importance as a shipping point, for its proximity to the Klamath and Salmon River mines was a distinct advantage.¹² In 1851 it was made the seat of justice of Klamath County, when that county was formed by the state legislature.¹³ A sawmill was erected at Little River the same year, and another at Trinidad the following year.¹⁴ The harbor at Trinidad was, however, only an open roadstead, and at some seasons of the year much exposed to the sea.¹⁵ Under these circumstances shipping was carried on with difficulty, and the trade of Trinidad began to pass to her rivals. In 1854 the county seat was removed to Crescent City, which since its founding in 1853 had become a strong competitor of Trinidad.¹⁶ So it was that by 1856 Trinidad had again lapsed

⁹ Statements of W. T. Olmstead and Byron Deming who came to Trinidad at this time. The *San Francisco Herald*, Feb. 20, 1851, speaks of the drain of population from the other districts.

¹⁰ *Alta California*, Feb. 2, 1851. By an act of the California legislature, passed Feb. 18, 1850, Trinity County had been created and its boundaries roughly defined, but it had at that time been left under the jurisdiction of Shasta County. *Statutes of California*, 1850:62. *Infra*, n. 13. Coy, *California County Boundaries*, 278.

¹¹ Many later attempts have been made to separate the gold from this sand but none have been successful.

¹² In the fall of 1851 Trinidad was the leading port for express and supplies, *Report of the Secretary of the Interior communicating . . . a copy of the correspondence between the department of the Interior and the Indian agents in California*. Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 152, 154, 163. Until 1854 vessels stopped at Trinidad although not at Humboldt Bay, and much of the mail and express was carried to the latter place on mule backs over a difficult trail. *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 9, 1854.

¹³ At the time when Trinity County was organized, the northern part was cut off and organized as Klamath County. *Statutes of California*, 1851:516. Coy, *California County Boundaries*, 123.

¹⁴ The mill at Little River was that of Luffelholz (locally called Luffenholz); that at Trinidad was erected by Deming and Marsh. See archives of Humboldt County Recorder, *Preemption Claims, Klamath County*, 1851-1853:8; Deming, *Statement*, MS., 1.

¹⁵ Deming, *Statement*, MS., 1, 2.

¹⁶ *Constitution of the Point St. George Exploring Company*, MS., organized Jan. 31, 1853, for the purpose of locating and building up a town on or near Paragon Bay. The original is owned by James McNulty of Crescent City.

into comparative insignificance, and its inferiority to its rival towns was manifest.¹⁷

Land Companies. While the settlement of Trinidad seems to have been made by a group of individuals rather casually associated, the towns on Humboldt Bay were laid out by fairly well organized companies. These were the Laura Virginia Association, the Union Company, and the Mendocino Exploring Company. The purpose of these companies was to control the lands on the bay which would be suitable for settlement, with particular reference to lands suitable for town sites.

The first of the towns to be established on the bay were located by the members of the Laura Virginia Association. This company was organized under two boards of directors, one board resident in San Francisco, the other going with the expedition.¹⁸ According to the articles of the association:

when any important discoveries were made the members accompanying the expedition were to select and take possession of such lands and locations as they should deem most eligible for commercial or agricultural purposes. Each locator was to hold his claim for the joint benefit of all the members, until, by a subsequent allotment, he should have his interest defined in severalty, with due regard to rights and shares in town sites as well as in the exterior lands. A certain proportion (one-sixteenth) of the whole was reserved as a contingent, chargeable with such extraordinary expenses as the making of trails and bridges . . . , and all matters of a public nature in which the benefit of the community was distinguished from that of the individual.¹⁹

The Union Company, on account of its activities, was probably the most important of these three rival organizations. It was composed almost entirely of men who had come overland from Sonoma with the returning members of the Gregg expedition.²⁰ They arrived at the bay about the middle of April, just after the Laura Virginia Association had established its settlement at Humboldt Point. On April 27, 1850, an agreement was drawn up and signed by

¹⁷ San Francisco Bulletin, Jan. 7, 1856, gives the population as 80. *Infra*, 200.

¹⁸ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 107. The author seems to have had access to some of the documents and records of the association, now no longer available.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 119.

²⁰ L. K. Wood in Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 95.

the thirty-three members of the company, whereby each bound himself to enter a quarter-section of land, and to hold it for the common benefit of all.²¹ It was arranged that each member should hold his claim for six months, when all the lands would be put on sale and the profits equally divided.²² Under this agreement claims were laid to most of the desirable lands around the northern part of the bay, reaching as far south as Bucksport.

The methods of the Union Company were not always worthy of commendation, for the spirit of monopoly was strong in some of the members. In several cases threats were made against later arrivals who endeavored to settle on lands which the company claimed to control, and in other cases settlers were required to pay high prices to be shown the lines of survey made by the company in order to file upon adjoining lands.²³ The organization did not long continue, for at the end of the half-year, when the profits had been pooled, the chief motive of the company had disappeared and it soon ceased to be an important factor, although some of its members remained in the region as permanent settlers.

Of the Mendocino Exploring Company little is known, but its purpose and the nature of its organization were doubtless similar to the other two companies. It was composed of twenty-eight men, some of whom were members of the party of the *General Morgan*, which had recently explored the bay.²⁴ They had been invited to share in the building up of Trinidad, but being dissatisfied there had decided to turn again to the bay, which was called by them "Mendocino" Bay, as a more desirable place for settlement.²⁵ On their return they found the two other companies in possession of the best lands, but by a compromise agreement with the Union Company they were to be permitted to share in the settlement of Eureka and other places south of that point.²⁶

²¹ Record of agreement in the archives of County Recorder, *Miscellany, Book A*, 4.

²² Archives of County Clerk, *Miscellaneous Papers of the District and County Courts*, W. Van Dyke et al. vs. Th. Ricks.

²³ *Ibid.*, Lindsey, *Statement of reminiscences*, MS., 2-3; Averell, *Statement*, MS., 2-3.

²⁴ The only two men for whose membership in the company there is official evidence are Jas. H. Van Houten and Jas. Ryan. These men signed for the 28 members of the company in the agreement mentioned in note 26 below. Ryan is known to have been one of the *General Morgan* or Brannan party. Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*.

²⁵ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 101; *Alta California*, Apr. 24, 1850. This is a letter from one of the party, giving a full account of why they preferred Mendocino (Humboldt) Bay.

²⁶ Archives of County Recorder, *Miscellany, Book A*, 3.

Their part in the establishment of Eureka will be taken up later.

Humboldt City, 1850-1852. As related in the previous chapter the *Laura Virginia* entered Humboldt Bay April 14, 1850.²⁷ Immediately the members of the association began to lay out a city, which in their imagination was sure to become the unrivalled metropolis of the region. To this new town, as also to the bay, they gave the name "Humboldt," in honor of the great German scientist and explorer of that name.²⁸ The members of the association who were located on the bay were most enthusiastic over the new town, and immediately began to prepare for its future greatness. In May a survey was made under the direction of R. S. La Motte. The map made at this time shows a city of great pretensions, covering a waterfront of no less than three or four miles and capable of indefinite extension into the interior.²⁹ Other men had been set to work cutting a trail through to the mines. These various expenses were assessed against the members of the association, since as yet sufficient money could not be acquired by the sale of the lots in the contingent fund. This was not to the liking of the San Francisco members of the association, and as a consequence the organization was dissolved.³⁰

The trustees at Humboldt, being freed from the hindrance of the San Francisco officials, worked in harmony for the success of the new enterprise. The following extracts from a letter between D. W. Coit, a loyal member of the association in San Francisco, and E. H. Howard, of Humboldt, give some interesting items regarding the early conditions and the methods employed in the efforts to advance the town:

I received some little time ago from you a petition to the Agent of the Postoffice Department with respect to the establishment of a postoffice at Humboldt . . . I only wait the Agent's return here, which is expected by the next steamer from Panama, to place the matter before him and endeavor to have some prompt action taken in the matter.

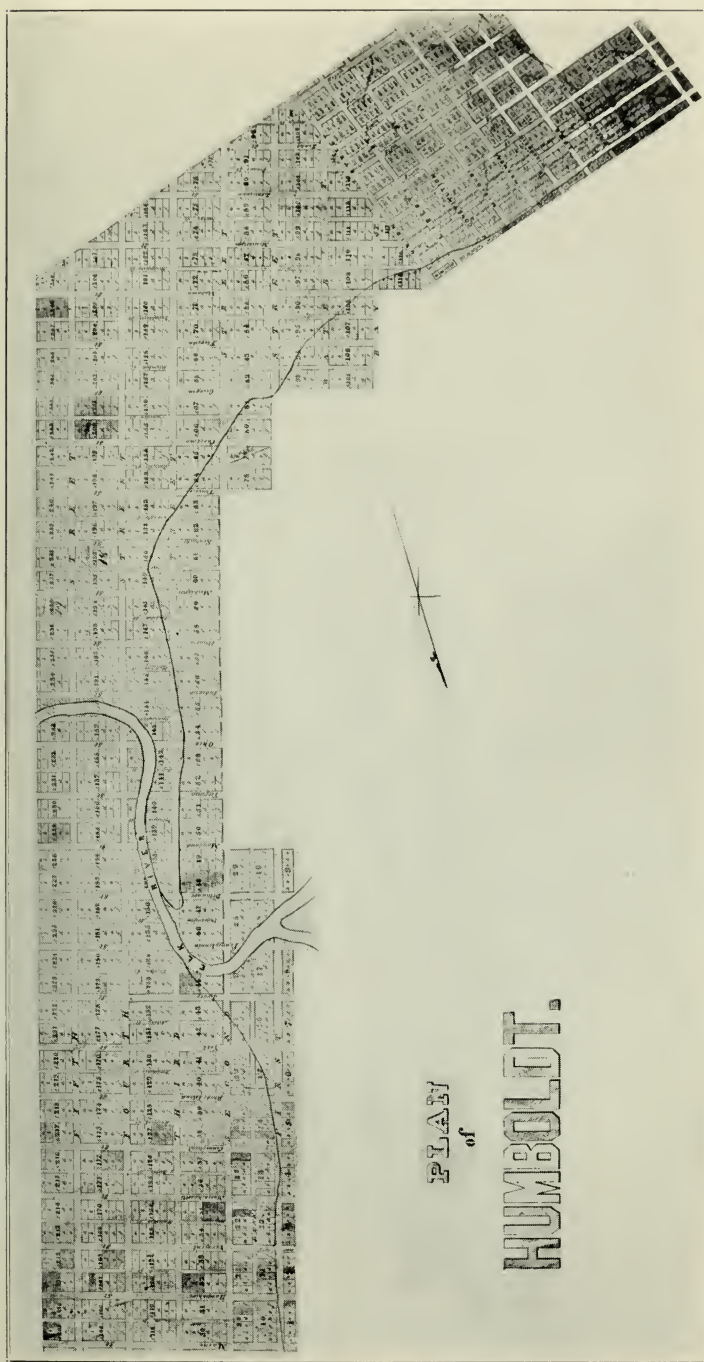
You will, I think, be glad to hear that I have been in some degree instrumental in inducing Captain Knight (Agent for P. M. S. Company) to order his

²⁷ Ante, 47.

²⁸ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 118; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 170, 175.

²⁹ The original map is in the archives of Humboldt County Recorder.

³⁰ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 121.



PLAT
of
HUMBOLDT.

PLAT OF HUMBOLDT CITY, 1850

Oregon steamers to touch at our port on their way up and down the coast. That company of course look for advantages to their own private interests wherever they can obtain them, and if we wish to secure their stopping at our place exclusively, and with regularity on their trips, we must make some concessions of lots, and so I have assured Capt. Knight we should be prepared to do so under some positive engagement on his part. . . . Without anything being definitely settled between us, Capt. Knight agrees that the *Columbia*, which leaves on Monday next for Oregon, shall touch at Humboldt for the purpose that her Captain [LeRoy] making a survey of the bay and noting the advantages of the different places on it which set up claims to prominence. Capt. LeRoy, from a conversation I have had with him, will go impressed favorably toward our place; but there is no question that it will be politic to make him directly interested in the place, by giving him individually such an interest as shall enlist him for us—I should say at least a half a share. His report to Capt. Knight and to the company will be very important; then he will always exercise great influence with the passengers which he will bring to the Bay from hence, as well as from Oregon. This I look upon as a very important turning point in our affairs: and this new arrangement proposed may be the pivot on which our whole success and prosperity may turn.³¹

The subsidy of lots was granted to the steamship company, which for a time performed its part of the agreement. In the meantime Humboldt held its own among the towns of the bay, due in large manner to its nearness to the entrance and to the fact that a good working trail had been cut through to the Trinity mines.

In the fall of 1851, Redick McKee, as Indian Agent of the United States government, made a tour through northern California and spent some time at Humboldt, which was one of the important towns of the region, although even then it had begun to decline.³² Mr. Gibbs, the interpreter of the party, drew a sketch of the place which has been preserved, and gives us the following description, which shows that the early visions of Humboldt's greatness had been based upon false hopes:

The town, if it may be called so, is situated upon a little plateau of about 40 acres, nearly opposite the

³¹ *Ibid.*, 122-123 gives the letter in full. It is dated San Francisco, May 3, 1851.

³² *Infra*, 138 *et seq.*

entrance, and under a bluff, rising from the midst of a tract of low ground. It contains only about a dozen houses, and was at this time nearly deserted; Uniontown, at the head of the Bay, having proved a more successful rival in the packing trade.³³

Union, 1850-52. In December, 1849, the party led by Josiah Gregg had spent Christmas Day encamped on a high plateau overlooking the bay from the north.³⁴ The following April when the members of the party had returned with the others who made up the Union Company this was one of the first places to be selected as a town site.³⁵ So promising was its location that it soon became the chief center of interest of the Union Company, and received from them the name "Union Town," which by usage became shortened to "Union."³⁶ This is the present town of Arcata.³⁷

In the selection of this location the company had been guided by several natural advantages: it was situated on a beautiful plateau at the head of the bay, and was surrounded by good agricultural and timber lands; but most important of all, it was the nearest point on the bay to the mining district, and therefore offered the greatest promise as the desired shipping point to the mines. That its founders had been wise in their selection of this site is attested by the rapid and steady growth of the town during that period, when packing to the mines was the chief business of the settlements around the bay. The census taken during the summer of 1850 allows to Union 190 inhabitants, of whom 58 were women.³⁸ In 1851 at an election to decide the location of the county seat of the newly organized Trinity County, Union received 364 votes, while Eureka received but 195 and Humboldt City 4.³⁹ To Weaverville, however, was given the honor, for she was able to muster 441 votes. The importance of Union during its early years will be taken up in a later section.⁴⁰

Bucksport, 1850-52. Another site selected by members of the Gregg party was located on the eastern side of the

³³ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 131.

³⁴ L. K. Wood, *The discovery of Humboldt Bay, a narrative*; *ante*, 42.

³⁵ L. K. Wood, in Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 95.

³⁶ *Infra*, p. 199.

³⁷ See illustration opposite p. 70.

³⁸ United States, *Seventh census*, 1850 (Serial 686), 971.

³⁹ San Francisco, *Herald*, Oct. 2, 1851. For references regarding the organization of Trinity County see *ante*, 51, notes 10 and 13.

⁴⁰ *Infra*, 59 *et seq.*

bay about five miles northeast of the entrance. In December, 1849, David A. Buck had expressed himself in favor of this location, and had carved his name on a tree near at hand. Before the return of Buck in the summer of 1850 Dr. H. N. Lloyd had laid claim to the land under the agreement of the Union Company. After building a log cabin, however, he had neglected his claim to live at Union, when that place became the center of operations for the company. At this juncture Buck returned and took possession of the land notwithstanding the protests and threats of the Union Company.⁴¹ From this time on the place was known as Buck's Port, or Bucksport.

Bucksport's chief claims were that it was located on the main channel of the bay, near its entrance, thus making it the logical shipping point, and it was at the same time as near the mines as were the other settlements. A town of some eighty blocks was surveyed off,⁴² and Bucksport soon began to claim its share of the new arrivals on the bay. In 1852 the need of military protection for the new settlements was met by the establishment of an army post, Fort Humboldt, on the high bluff behind Bucksport.⁴³ This brought with it greater prestige for the new town as well as an increased population, and from that time on it became a competitor for the first honors among the bay towns.⁴⁴

Eureka, 1850-52. Eureka, which was later to become the metropolis of the whole bay region, was the last of the early towns to be founded, and for a time was much less important than any of its rivals. The Union Company included Eureka among its claims. The chief interest of this company was centered in Union, however, and their claims in Eureka as well as in Bucksport were to be a matter of dispute. In May, 1850, the members of the Mendocino Exploring Company arrived at the bay and located at Eureka.⁴⁵ On May 13, 1850, an agreement was signed by the representatives of the Union and the Mendocino companies whereby the latter was to be permitted to share

⁴¹ Buck was drowned off Columbia River in 1852 and his claims were taken up by W. Van Dyke and others, while the claims of Lloyd fell to Thos. Ricks. The suit at law between these parties furnishes much information regarding the early settlements. Archives of County Clerk, *Miscellaneous Papers of the District and County Courts.*

⁴² Archives of County Recorder, *Map of Bucksport, 1851 (?)*.

⁴³ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 163.

⁴⁴ For account of Bucksport, 1853-1856, see *infra*, 60, 61.

⁴⁵ *Ante*, 53, n. 24.

in the establishment of the new town, which was to be called "Eureka." The members of the Mendocino Company agreed to locate at least three quarter-sections of land which were to be added to the three of the Union Company.⁴⁶ This land was then to be surveyed into town lots and divided among the two companies in proportion to their numbers, thirty to the Union Company and twenty-eight to the Mendocino Company. The latter company also agreed that each of its members would erect a building of specified size upon his property within sixty days or would forfeit to the Union Company his title to the lots.⁴⁷ The leading figure in the Mendocino Company was Mr. James Ryan, under whose direction the town was surveyed and soon began to take its place among the new settlements.

The Eurekaans were enthusiastic boosters as were also the people of the other towns, and the San Francisco papers now contained full information regarding the advantages of the various places. The claims of Eureka are fully set forth in a letter of the time, which while admitting the existence of other towns within the harbor, declares:

The only one which seems to progress is the town of "Eureka." This is situated at the head of navigation, the channel running within twenty yards of the shore, and some seven miles from the mouth of the entrance. The location is the finest in the bay, and already is there a road cut from this point to the Trinity mines, which is two days journey from this point.⁴⁸

Notwithstanding the superior advantages claimed for Eureka, they were not at first recognized, and its supporters were compelled to put forth strenuous efforts to maintain its position among the rival settlements. During the summer of 1850 the firm of Crozier and Ricks was formed, and acquired the title to a great part of the Eureka property from the original holders. A letter between the two members of the firm, dated San Francisco, Jan. 17, 1851, gives some idea of the difficulties and methods of these early promoters:⁴⁹

⁴⁶ The preemption notices of Wm. Cornell and Isaac Wilson, members of the Union Company, are to be found recorded in the archives of County Recorder, *Green Book, Deeds, City of Eureka*, 70, 78. They are both dated April 21, 1850, and include that part of the city lying between A and S streets, and back as far as Ninth street.

⁴⁷ Record of agreement in the archives of County Recorder, *Miscellany, Book A*, 3.

⁴⁸ *Alta California*, May 27, 1850.

⁴⁹ From the original letter used with permission of H. L. Ricks.

The steamer (Chesapeake) has agreed for an interest in the Town to Stop regularly twice a month at our place and in as much as she will at present only remain perhaps one tide Union people must be there ready to come on her as they would not have the time if they were to remain up at Union as they now do until a vessel is ready to sail, this arrangement will be beneficial to Eureka, and will bring all the miners to that point. . . .

So far as my interest goes in Eureka I am disposed to give liberally for the advancement of our Town, and I am fully satisfied 'tis the only way we can make a place of it—Humboldt and Trinidad are moving Heaven and Earth for a Port of Entry and other things—I have written half a dozen letters to friends and acquaintances in Congress on the subject of our Harbor &c.

I would like very much to settle the matter about the preemption so as to realize funds to pay our freight should I get a stock of goods, try and do it.

Yours truly,

Crozier.

Supremacy of Union Town (Arcata) 1852-1856. In spite of the advantages claimed by the rival towns and the strenuous efforts made by them to stand at the head of the new settlements, Union steadily grew, and for a number of years was easily the leader both in population and business activity. This was no doubt due to her natural advantages. Located as she was at the head of the bay, with a direct route to the mines, she soon became the center for trade with the mining district; while she was also in the midst of a very productive agricultural region whose value early became known. By 1853 the choicest of these lands had been taken up by settlers.⁵⁰

One disadvantage from which Union suffered was the difficulty with which shipping was carried on, for while the town was located near tidewater extensive mud flats separated it from navigable waters. In 1854 permission to remedy this was obtained from the state legislature in a law authorizing the building of a wharf.⁵¹ In the spring of 1855 this was completed,⁵² and for a time a great amount of business was done over the wharf, which was connected

⁵⁰ See map *infra*, 101.

⁵¹ *Statutes of California*, 1854 (Kerr): 65.

⁵² *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 24, April 14, 1855.

with the town by a railroad or tramway two miles in length, an old white horse serving as locomotive.⁵³

In 1853 the growth of population in the region of Humboldt Bay called for the formation of a new county, and by action of the state legislature of May 12, 1853, Trinity County was subdivided, the western portion being designated as Humboldt County.⁵⁴ The first election resulted in the choice of Union as the county seat, which not only indicated the recognition of the leadership of this town but also greatly stimulated its importance during the years to follow.⁵⁵

The other towns did not give up their claims to supremacy without a struggle. This was especially true of Bucksport and Eureka. Humboldt, as already stated, had soon ceased to be much of a rival, for although there were still a few houses the business done there was of little consequence, and it was even fast losing the distinction of being called a town.⁵⁶

Bucksport, however, was a place of much business and life. It had a sawmill and several stores, while the soldiers from the fort added much to the activity of the place. The one purpose most cherished by the towns of the bay since the formation of the county was to become the county seat. In September, 1854, the contest for the removal of the county seat was opened by a petition for its relocation at some point farther south than Union, since that place was not centrally located, being not far from the northern boundary of the county, and difficult of access through lack of roads.⁵⁷ This agitation was popular in the whole southern portion of the county, although the two aspirants for the honor were Bucksport and Eureka.

Bucksport at this time put forth strenuous efforts to secure this prize. William Roberts, the largest land holder, made a public offer of a block of land in the town for county buildings, and proposed to deed a town lot to each qualified voter of the county who did not already have an interest in

⁵³ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 6, 1855; May 7, 1856; June 18, 1859; Deming, *Statement*, MS.; *Infra*, 287.

⁵⁴ *Statutes of California*, 1853:161. Coy, *California County Boundaries*, 110.

⁵⁵ Ricks, Mrs. Adeline Fouts, *Private journal*, MS.; Deming, *Statement*, MS.; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 109; *Humboldt Times*, June 28, 1856.

⁵⁶ *Alta California*, Jan. 21, 1854; *Humboldt Times*, June 28, 1856. The idea that there ought to be a town named Humboldt on Humboldt Bay persisted long after the town had ceased to exist. The government maps for many years indicated Humboldt as an important place. In 1858, by act of Congress, the Land Office was officially located at Humboldt. Since, however, there was nothing at Humboldt, the office was opened at Eureka. *Infra*, 63.

⁵⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 23, 30, 1854.

Bucksport, if he could establish "by his own oath . . . that he had voted for Bucksport as the county seat."⁵⁸ In spite of this remarkable offer Bucksport secured only third place at the election.⁵⁹ Not being successful in the attempt to secure the county seat the people of Bucksport turned their attention to other lines. In 1854 the state legislature had granted to Roberts and others the right to build a wharf at Bucksport,⁶⁰ and soon afterward the construction of a breakwater was projected by these same parties.⁶¹ Furthermore, both the state legislature and Congress were induced to take action toward making Bucksport a port of entry for the northern portion of the state.⁶²

Eureka. The early years of Eureka's history were years of struggle and discouragement for its promoters. It was located on the bay in a position very favorable for shipping, but there was then but little to export beyond a small supply of lumber and piles; the great bulk of the business of the bay was carried on through Union, which was nearer the mines even if not so accessible for ocean steamers. As late as 1854 the mercantile business done at Eureka was of little importance.⁶³ The *Humboldt Times*, publication of which had commenced in Eureka in September, 1854, was in December of that year removed to Union.⁶⁴ Notwithstanding the lack of prosperity the friends of the new town still worked enthusiastically for its success.

The agitation for the change of the county seat was eagerly seized upon as the desired opportunity to bring Eureka to the front, and the Eurekaans worked most ardently to swing the vote in favor of their town. The election occurred on October 25, resulting in 469 votes being cast for Eureka, 310 for Union, and 288 for Bucksport.⁶⁵ Although Eureka had secured more votes than either of its rivals, the

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, Oct. 14, 21, 1854. This proposition was duly recorded in the office of County Recorder, *Deeds, B*, 63-66.

⁵⁹ Archives of County Clerk, *Election Returns; Humboldt Times*, Oct. 28, 1854; Elliott *Humboldt County*, 110.

⁶⁰ *Statutes of California*, 1854 (Kerr): 255.

⁶¹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 6, 1856.

⁶² *Resolution of the Legislature of California in favor of the establishment of a collection district in the northern part of that state, and of a port of entry at Bucksport, in said state*, Feb. 20, 26, 1856 (Serial 835, Doc. 40); *Humboldt Times*, May 31, 1856.

⁶³ From the *Journal* of Mrs. C. S. Ricks, wife of the chief promoter of Eureka, it will be seen that most of the articles purchased were procured in Union, e.g., dress goods, towels, and even a clothes-line. Shoes on one occasion were bought in Bucksport. In fact, the only things sold in Eureka seem to have been candy, nuts, and fruits.

⁶⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 2, Dec. 23, 1854.

⁶⁵ *Ante*, n. 59.

law required that the successful town have a majority of the votes cast, consequently the election was without result, and by order of the judge another election was called for November 20 to decide the issue between the two leading places. The feeling of rivalry between Eureka and Union was now intense, and charges of fraud were made on both sides at this second election. One precinct, Angel's Ranch, with scarcely enough voters to form an election board, cast 2136 votes for Union.⁶⁶ Eureka in some unexplained manner had been able to secure 1804 votes in her favor, but in the manoeuver had been outclassed by the action of Union.⁶⁷ It was evident that fraud had been committed on both sides, so the ruling of the judge was that the county seat should remain where it was.⁶⁸

Notwithstanding that in spite of these two elections the county seat remained at Union, few people except those who lived there seem to have considered the issue as settled, and during the following year the controversy went merrily on. The board of supervisors, on account of the fraud, voted to abolish the precinct at Angel's Ranch and refused to appropriate any money for the erection of county buildings at Union in spite of the earnest petition of the people of that place.⁶⁹ A correspondent in the *Humboldt Times* suggested a solution of the question by a division of the county, whereby two county seats could be established on Humboldt Bay, one at Union and the other at Eureka or Bucksport.⁷⁰

In December, 1855, the question was again brought to an issue by a petition from the southern end of the county asking the state legislature to fix the county seat at Eureka, and to urge upon Congress the importance of establishing a new collection district in the northern part of the state, with Bucksport as a port of entry.⁷¹ This new move meant success for the dissatisfied element, for during the same year C. S. Ricks, of Eureka, had been elected to represent the district in the state legislature in place of Maj. A. H. Mur-

⁶⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 25, Dec. 2, 30, 1854.

⁶⁷ Deming, *Statement*, MS., 3, explains that the Union men had secured the names for the poll list at Angel's Ranch by copying the list of passengers arriving in San Francisco. See also Ricks, *Journal*, MS. These original poll lists are still preserved among the archives in the old courthouse at Eureka. See illustration opposite.

⁶⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 30, 1854; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 111.

⁶⁹ *Humboldt Times*, May 26, 1855.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, 1855.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 22, 1855.



dock, of Union.⁷² One of the first acts of the new representative was to present this petition and to introduce a bill transferring the county seat to Eureka.⁷³ Notwithstanding a remonstrance from the Union faction, the bill received the required majority in each house, and was duly signed by the governor.⁷⁴ On the first of May, 1856, the county officials took up their location in Eureka, which from then on was to remain the seat of justice for the Humboldt Bay region.⁷⁵

The location of the county seat at Eureka was one of several acts which helped to insure the future of the place. In April, 1855, through the influence of Mr. Ricks, an act had been passed by the legislature readjusting the question of land titles in the various towns of the county. Many of the original locators had left the region but still held title to a large part of the property in the towns. These lots remained unimproved and unoccupied except where they were held by settlers without title. Under the provisions of this act all land titles in the towns of the county were to be readjusted within a period of five months; *bona fide* residents of the county, whose deeds had been properly recorded, were to be left secure in their titles, but all claimants to unimproved lots who had not been *bona fide* residents of the county during the year previous to the act were to lose the title to their land, which would then become the common property of the municipal body.⁷⁶

In April, 1856, Eureka had been granted a charter, under the provisions of which an election was held in June, thus making it an incorporated city.⁷⁷ At this time a writer in the *Humboldt Times*, which had returned to Eureka,⁷⁸ enthusiastically described it as the "greatest lumber manufacturing town on the Pacific," having seven sawmills, with a total capacity of two million feet of lumber a month besides lath and shingles. It had a flourmill, hotels, and several retail stores.⁷⁹ In 1858 a land office was established at Humboldt, but since there was no longer a town at that

⁷² *Journal of the Assembly*, 6th and 7th sessions.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 7th session (1856), 319, 326.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 338, 444; *Statutes of California*, 1856:37.

⁷⁵ *Humboldt Times*, May 3, 1856.

⁷⁶ *Statutes of California*, 1855:168-170.

⁷⁷ *Statutes of California*, 1856:103; *Humboldt Times*, June 28, 1856.

⁷⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 21, 1858, was the first issue at Uniontown.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, June 28, 1856; *San Francisco Bulletin*, Jan. 26, 1857.

place the office was temporarily located at Bucksport and soon afterward moved to Eureka, where it has remained permanently, for Eureka by this time had come to be recognized as the leading town on Humboldt Bay.⁸⁰ Bucksport had become tributary to her former rival, and Union, because of her shallow harbor and the decline of the packing trade with the mines, had dropped back into second place.

⁸⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 9, 30; Nov. 13, 1858; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 127. For discussion of rivalries among the early towns of California see Coy, *Gold Days*, ch. XI, "Paper Towns and Easy Money"; pp. 228-234 deal with the Humboldt Bay towns.

CHAPTER V

TRAILS AND THE PACKING TRADE, 1850-1859

In the early development of the towns considered in the previous chapter, the building of trails and the packing of freight to the mines have been noted as important contributing factors. In this chapter it is proposed to discuss these elements more fully, considering the various routes connecting the region with the mines and the outside world; noting the importance of the business done by the traders; and the increase of business and settlements following improved trails and the efforts to secure wagon roads.

The Sonoma Trail, 1850-1852. One of the trails used extensively during the opening up of the region led thither from the settlements around Sonoma and was known as the Sonoma Trail. The L. K. Wood party, which, after its separation from that of Josiah Gregg, followed south along the courses of the Eel and Russian rivers, was probably the first to make use of this general route.¹ The first trustworthy account of this trail or route appears in the reports of the expedition of Redick McKee, United States Indian Agent, who passed through the region during the fall of 1851.²

The guide to this party was Thomas Sebring, one of the companions of L. K. Wood, who had returned to Humboldt Bay early in 1850 with the original Sonoma party which took part in the founding of the Union Company.³ From the report of the expedition the route taken by this party can be traced in a fairly satisfactory manner. It followed north along the western side of Russian River until near its source, thence into the region of the upper Eel River, passing through Long Valley, striking the South Fork of Eel River near the present town of Garberville. It then followed that branch of Eel River to the main stream, and thence passed to the settlements in the lower valley. While the earlier

¹ *Ante*, 43.

² *Report of the Secretary of the Interior communicating . . . a copy of the correspondence between the department of the Interior and the Indian agents in California.* Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4); Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III. The itinerary of this expedition is shown on a map in Secretary of War, *Reports of explorations and surveys, 1853-1856*, XI (Serial 768). Since it is not entirely accurate, I have relied more fully upon the text of the narrative.

³ *Ante*, 52-53.

parties followed the course of the South Fork, in later times the trail kept to the ridge between this branch and the main stream until near their junction at which point it crossed to the north bank of the river and then over the ridge to the Van Duzen fork, where it intercepted the Eel River-Trinity trail which led to the bay towns.⁴

Early in the summer of 1850 this route was urged by the people of Sonoma as the most direct approach to the Trinity mines. From the remarkable claims set forth in behalf of this trail there can be little doubt that the motive prompting this action was not so much to benefit the traveling public as to bring profit to the people of Sonoma. A notice from that town signed by "Many citizens," published in the *Alta California*, gives an idea of the claims made:⁵

We wish to inform the public of San Francisco that we have returned from Trinity, and that the route by land is now open; time of travel four days by wagon, and by horses two or three days. There will leave this town on Thursday, April 25th., seven wagons for the Trinity Diggings and teams will run regularly once a week leaving on Thursdays. Persons going to the Trinity mines will find this the best route.

For a time these claims succeeded in attracting some of the travel to this new route, but its disadvantages soon became known and as a trail to the mines it was no longer considered.⁶ Something of the nature of the route may be learned from the experiences related by William Lindsey, who came overland from Sonoma, reaching Union about the middle of June, 1850. The party of which he was a member had crossed the plains and with their wagons and cattle were headed for the mines. Hearing of this trail they decided to follow it to the northern mines. Before they had proceeded far they were joined by another party under A. J. Heustis, and they made the journey together. Their route was about the same as that taken by the McKee party until they reached a position near the southern limits of Humboldt County. Here, instead of turning west to the South Fork, they continued to the north and east, crossing

⁴ See map, p. 163. Besides the authorities cited I have used the survey Plat Books in the United States Land Office, Eureka; and Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865. See *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 7, 1867.

⁵ *Alta California*, Apr. 22, 1850.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 9, 10, May 24, June 3, July 1, 1850.

the main branch of Eel River near the later site of Fort Seward. From here their route led to the upper Larrabee Creek and then across the Van Duzen and Upper Mad rivers. Then following north along the ridge of the South Fork (Trinity) mountains they intercepted the Union-Trinity trail. Their supply of provisions being low they then decided to turn west to the new settlements.⁷

Although they had started with their wagons they were forced to abandon them before they had reached the southern limit of Humboldt County,⁸ and even then found their progress slow. That they had followed the much lauded Sonoma Trail is not certain; but having started with this purpose in view, and being encumbered with wagons and stock it is natural to suppose that they sought the most practicable route. Their experiences, moreover, were in keeping with those of others who had tried the Sonoma Trail; one writer declares this to be "no road at all," and complains that instead of four days it had taken him twenty-eight days to go from Sonoma to the Trinity.⁹ McKee states that the trail from Russian River was exceedingly rough and that in making the trip they had lost one horse and three or four mules that had broken down.¹⁰ Although these difficulties made the route undesirable as a road to the mines, it still continued to be used by those who wished to reach Humboldt by an overland trail. In this connection it will be considered later in the chapter.

Early Trails to the Mines, 1850-1853. While the overland trail from Sonoma had contributed to some extent to the early immigration into the Humboldt Bay region, it did not have so conspicuous a part in the development of that region as did the trails leading from it to the mining districts. A study of the map reveals the fact that in their relationship to the Humboldt region these mines are grouped into two main divisions: viz., the Trinity River mines, of which Weaverville was the center; and the Klamath and Salmon River mines, of which Orleans Bar was the metropolis.

The earlier mines had been developed on the Trinity River, and it was from this district that the Gregg party

⁷ Lindsey, *Statement of reminiscences*, MS.

⁸ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 120, tells of the finding of these wagons the next year.

⁹ *Alta California*, July 1, 1850.

¹⁰ Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 181.

started on the expedition which resulted in the discovery of Humboldt Bay. In order to reach these mines it had been necessary to pass over the rugged Trinity Mountains from the upper Sacramento Valley by means of a difficult trail. It was in the hope of finding a shorter and easier route that this early exploring expedition was made.¹¹ Although it can scarcely be said that the new route was either shorter or easier than the old, it nevertheless became a strong competitor for the trade of the mines of the Weaverville district.

Had the towns of the Humboldt Bay region been dependent solely upon the trade with the Trinity River mines, they would have been far less prosperous in the earlier years. Fortunately the goldseekers soon discovered other mines to which the new coast towns afforded the easiest means of access. These were the mines on the lower Klamath and the Salmon rivers, for which Orleans Bar served as a center.¹²

Within a few weeks after the founding of the new towns on Humboldt Bay trails had been opened through the forests and mountains to the mining regions. The two towns foremost in this enterprise were Trinidad and Union, both of which by virtue of their locations were especially fitted to act as supply stations for the mines of the Klamath and Salmon river district. Trinidad, the first town established on this part of the coast, was for a time the leader in the packing trade, for her location near the Klamath mines gave her an advantage over the other towns. During the summer of 1850 a trail was made from Trinidad along the coast to Big Lagoon, thence across to the Klamath River, and up to the mining district.¹³ This trail seemed at the time to follow the most natural route, for in this way it intersected the trail leading up the river from Klamath City,¹⁴ a newly established town, located just above the mouth of the Klamath River. This, however, was not the shortest route, and with the disappearance of the ephemeral town it was displaced by another trail which took an almost direct

¹¹ L. K. Wood, *Narrative*, MS.; *Ante*, 38.

¹² The Salmon River mines were discovered in June, 1850, the Klamath mines in July and August, Bancroft, *California*, VI, 367, footnote.

¹³ *Ante*, 49; route in archives of Humboldt County Recorder, *Preemption Claims, Klamath Co.*, 1851-1853:13.

¹⁴ This town, as also Trinidad and those on Humboldt Bay, was laid out in the spring of 1850, as it was then thought that the Klamath River would be navigable. When this idea was found to be an error, and no gold was near at hand, the town soon died. Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 122; Archives of County Recorder, *Records of Trinidad, Book A of Deeds*, 70-71, record deeds for town lots, the valuation being \$2,000.

course to the junction of the Trinity and the Klamath Rivers.¹⁵ From Union another trail ran to Orleans by way of the Bald Hills, intersecting the Trinidad trail near the mouth of the Trinity River.¹⁶

The time of greatest excitement in the mines of this district was during the summer and fall of 1850 and the following winter, with the result that during this period the packing trade was of great importance to the coast towns, and Trinidad, which was looked to as the chief supply station, enjoyed the period of its greatest prosperity. A large number of mules had been driven to that place over the trail from Sonoma in May, 1850,¹⁷ but the demands of the packing trade required that more be shipped in during the following winter.¹⁸ High prices were obtained for carrying freight, as high as two dollars a pound being quoted as the rate from Trinidad to the Salmon mines.¹⁹ This naturally raised the price on all imported articles to an almost prohibitive figure, but such were the times that the miners were ready to meet the prices asked. In November, 1851, McKee paid twenty dollars for a hundred weight of flour at Durkee's Ferry, at the junction of the Trinity and the Klamath rivers, and reported that that was ten dollars below the market price.²⁰ During the summer of 1851 it is reported that an average of 100 mules a week left Union for the mines, taking \$4,000 or \$5,000 worth of goods.²¹

The towns farther south did not have such easy access to the Klamath River mines and therefore turned their efforts toward establishing communication with the mines of the Trinity region. Humboldt City was the first to cut a trail through to these mines, the route passing up Elk River to Kneeland Prairie and then south around Iaqua Buttes and across to the Trinity River. This trail was also used by Eureka, which had approaches leading to the main trail both by Ryan and Freshwater sloughs. Union also had a

¹⁵ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 135.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 133 *et seq.*, 145-146. The writer comments upon the network of trails already through the whole mountain region in 1851.

¹⁷ *Alta California*, May 22, July 1, 1850.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 12, 1851.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 2, 1851; Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 150.

²⁰ Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 179. Many other documents illustrate this condition. A ledger of A. J. Thompson in the archives of Trinity County Clerk shows that at Weaverville flour sold for \$75 per cwt. during the winter of 1853. Other articles were also high, depending upon the supply on hand.

²¹ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 132.

trail running to Kneeland Prairie where it intercepted this regular trail. In addition to this southern trail Union had another, more commonly used, leading by Bald Mountain, then via Burnt Ranch and the main branch of the Trinity to Weaverville.²²

Although considerable trade was carried on between the bay towns and the Trinity mines, the amount of business was small as compared with the trade with the Klamath mines. This is readily apparent from the relative prosperity of the towns trading with these two districts during these early years. It was not until later, when the trade with the Klamath mines became less profitable, that these southern trails came into their full use. In their proper connection they will, therefore, be considered again.

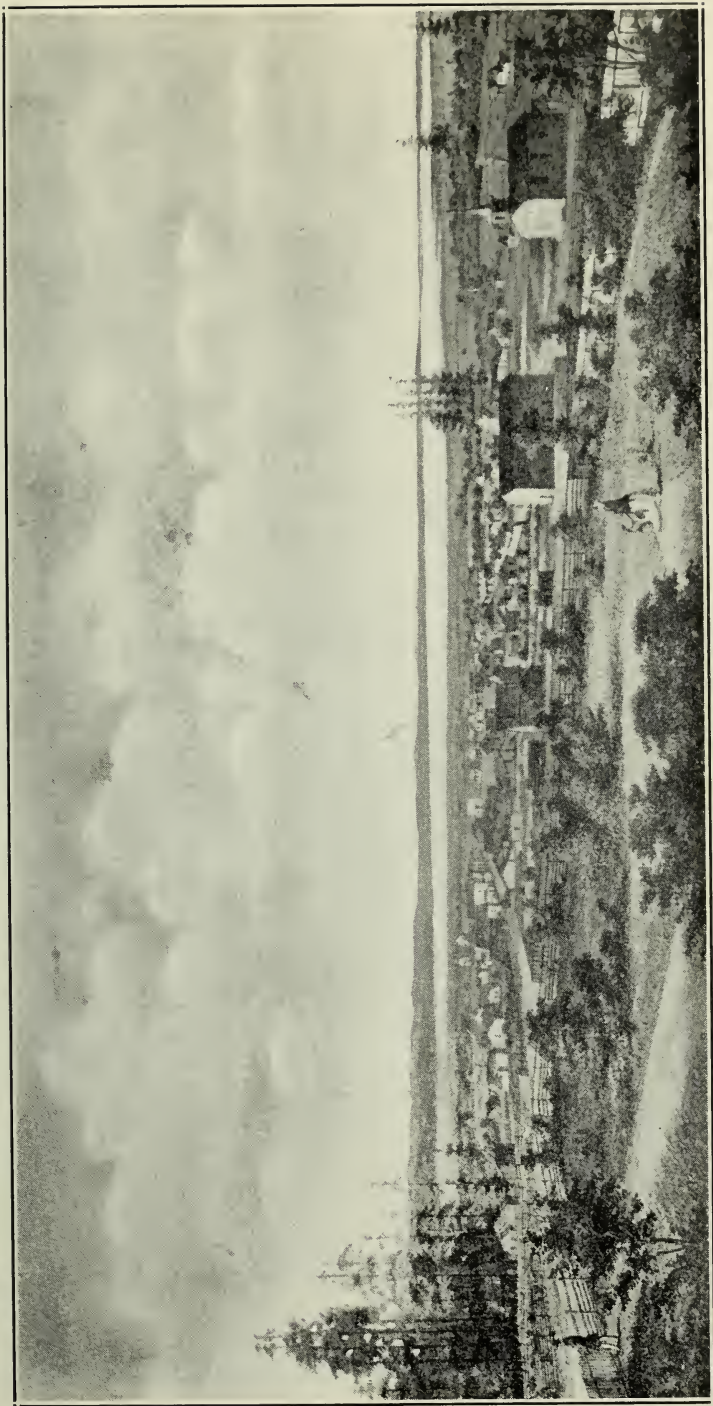
Trade with the Klamath Mines, 1855-1860. Although the population of the mining district around Orleans was the largest during the first year or so after its discovery, these mines continued to yield profitable returns for many years. During this time they retained their fair quota of the mining population, which was provided with supplies imported over the trails from the coast. With the decline of Trinidad as a port, Union rose in importance, and since she had good trails leading to both the Klamath and Trinity mines, was soon without a rival as leader in the packing trade. In 1854 this place is reported to have had twelve or fourteen stores with heavy stocks of goods, besides saddlery and harness shops, a gunsmith, a tinshop, and several blacksmith shops, all doing a good business.²³ During the next year it was claimed that the trade of Union amounted to more than a half million dollars annually, while the same authority states there was not a store with \$2,000 worth of goods in all the remainder of the county.²⁴

²² For location of trails see map of Indian wars reproduced on page 163.

It is not easy to locate these trails as they were originally, owing to the fact that the country was then unsurveyed and descriptions vague and also to the confusion caused by trails which were subsequently built through these mountains. In general, however, the chance for error is not great since really desirable routes were few. The early trail makers kept to the ridges. With this in view their routes can be fairly well determined in most cases. On the accompanying map I have been guided by many sources. In general, the trails marked on this map follow the routes shown on the earliest maps. The *Plat Books*, in the United States Land Office at Eureka, show existing trails at the time the lands were first surveyed; they have therefore been used very extensively. Contemporaneous statements give the general direction of these trails and help to identify them with known routes. In some cases there is doubt as to the location of the trail, but in general the route shown on the map may be accepted.

²³ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 16, 1854.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, June 16, 1855.



UNION TOWN (ARCATA), 1857

One of those most active in this trade was Isaac Minor, who was engaged in the business for about seven years preceding the Indian troubles. He relates that he began with a train of twenty-five mules loaded with potatoes, which he purchased at Union for four cents a pound and sold in the mines for an ounce of gold per hundredweight.²⁵ In 1854 he purchased a store in Orleans, making it a station for supplies, which he packed in from Union. To supplement this business he later bought a ranch on Redwood Creek, which furnished beef and dairy products for the mines.

As time passed the mines on the lower Klamath became less profitable, and the mining population shifted farther up the river, toward Scott and Shasta valleys; and although trails from Union reached into this district, other sections were better able to compete successfully for the supply trade. Crescent City had a trail reaching the Klamath River near Happy Camp, a point about midway between Orleans and Scott's River, and other trails came in from southern Oregon.²⁶ These conditions, together with the rise of hostility of the Redwood Creek and Hoopa Indians in the early sixties, very effectively checked the packing trade with these mines, so that even though it continued despite the wars it was never again the important factor it had been during the earlier years.

Trade with Weaverville, 1853-1860. Just as during the earlier years the great bulk of the trade of the bay towns was carried on with the Klamath River mines, so in the later period the trade with Weaverville came to have a position of greater importance. This shift in trade was due largely to the change in the relative importance of the mines of the two districts.

By 1854 trade between Union and the Trinity mines had become so important that it was felt necessary to improve the trails leading in that direction,²⁷ and by the beginning of 1856 the project of building a wagon road between Hum-

²⁵ An ounce of gold was then worth about \$17.25, San Francisco, *Herald*, Dec. 1, 1854. Allowing 200 pounds to the mule this would make a profit of over \$600. Isaac Minor, *Reminiscences*, MS.

²⁶ Minor, *Reminiscences*, MS., speaks of trade between Crescent City and Happy Camp. After 1857 this portion of the Klamath River was incorporated into Del Norte County. For other mention of the Oregon trails see Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 158; Report of the Secretary of War, accompanying the President's annual message, 1851 (Serial 611), 145-146, 148.

²⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 13, 1855.

boldt Bay and Weaverville was agitated by the papers of both regions.²⁸ Acting in accordance with this suggestion meetings were held at Union in May, 1856, and men were appointed to lay out a route.²⁹ Meanwhile the Eureka people, not to be outdone by Union, were pushing forward another trail in the direction of Hayfork,³⁰ and by July pack trains had reached Weaverville over this route.³¹ The wagon road did not materialize, but a new and better trail from Union was soon completed. In September a train of sixty mules reached Canyon Creek over this new trail,³² and during the next month regular trade was opened with Weaverville. On October first, twenty-five tons of freight arrived on the steamer for Weaverville, and on the following trip thirty-five tons more.³³

At the beginning of the next season trade with the mines commenced with great vigor. On March 17 one hundred twenty-five mules are reported to have left Union laden with freight for the mines.³⁴ It was now proposed to form a transportation company for the purpose of shipping goods directly from San Francisco to Weaverville via Union, delivering them at Weaverville at a stipulated rate and thus reducing the price of freight.³⁵ While this company was not organized, further evidence that this new trail was able to compete successfully with the route from the Sacramento Valley is seen by the fact that several Weaverville firms now definitely arranged to ship their goods by the Humboldt Bay route, and were able to sell them in Weaverville at prices asked at Shasta City.³⁶

Shasta City, which was the chief competitor with Humboldt Bay for the trade with the Trinity region, was located near the head of the Sacramento Valley. Freight was shipped up the river to Red Bluff, the head of navigation, and from there by wagon road to Shasta. From the latter place it was taken by mule trail up Clear Creek and across the Trinity Mountains to the Trinity River. This necessitated considerable rehandling, and freight rates on the Sacramento

²⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 19, 1856.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, May 5, 17, 24, 1856.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, May 31, 1856.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 9, 1856.

³² *Ibid.*, Sept. 27, Oct. 30, 1856, good account of route.

³³ *Ibid.*, Oct. 4, 18, 1856.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Mar. 21, Apr. 11, 1857.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Apr. 4, 1857.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 25, June 27, 1857, quoting the *Trinity Journal* and the *Shasta Republican*.

River and across the mountains were high.³⁷ Notwithstanding these difficulties the Shasta people now sought to regain their hold upon this trade by improving their route.³⁸

This activity on the part of the Shasta traders aroused the people of Humboldt to greater action, so that they proposed not only to improve their trails but also to build wagon roads from the bay to the two chief mining centers, Weaverville and Orleans Bar. The road to Weaverville, it was claimed, would be entirely practicable and could be built for \$50,000, at which figure it would pay good dividends to its owners.³⁹ In 1859 this project was taken up and at a meeting held at Union in September the "Humboldt and Trinity Plank and Turnpike Road Company" was organized, with shares at fifty dollars each.⁴⁰ The company began the construction of the road from Union with the understanding that the people of Weaverville would in a similar manner begin construction of a road from Trinity. After building about twenty miles of road it was learned that nothing was being done on the other end of the line so the work came to an abrupt termination.⁴¹ This lack of cooperation was doubtless due to the fact that another company had in the meantime begun the construction of a road between Weaverville and Shasta City, which had been reenforced by the building of a telegraph line along the route, thus connecting the Trinity region with the Sacramento Valley in a manner with which the Humboldt Bay towns were unable to compete.⁴² Furthermore, early in the sixties the hostility of the Indians became so great that the packing trade became a dangerous and unprofitable business, and the intimate relationship which had earlier existed between Trinity and Humboldt Bay gradually weakened.

Trails and Roads Around Humboldt Bay, 1850-59. The settlements in the region immediately around Humboldt Bay were connected by trails and roads at an early date. Wherever the country was not too mountainous these were wagon roads, but in other cases they remained mere mule trails for many years.

³⁷ *Humboldt Times*, June 27, 1857, from the *Shasta Republican*. The rate to Red Bluff was \$40 per ton, *Ibid.*, Apr. 23, 1857.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1857.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1857.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 27, Sept. 17, Dec. 3, 1859.

⁴¹ Minor, *Reminiscences*, MS., 2.

⁴² Cox, *The annals of Trinity County*, 29-30.

One of the first wagon roads to be constructed led from the Eel River settlements, near the Van Duzen branch, to Humboldt Bay. As early as September, 1851, McKee found this to be a road suitable for wagons.⁴³ On account of the lack of navigation on Eel River this was an important highway for the settlers of Eel River Valley, and in addition it served as a part of the overland trail. A road had also been made around the edge of the bay from Eureka to Bucksport and Humboldt City. These roads, however, were poorly constructed, and were often in need of repair notwithstanding a heavy tax levied for their support.⁴⁴

Between Union and Eureka, strange as it may seem, there was no wagon road during the first ten years after the founding of these settlements. An old Indian trail leading around the bay was utilized by those who wished to travel by horseback; but the trip was a difficult one, and required the larger part of a day.⁴⁵ In August, 1854, a road had been surveyed from the lower ford on Mad River to Bucksport, passing through Union and Eureka, but it was not until much later that the road was actually constructed.⁴⁶ The reason for this delay may perhaps be better understood from a reference in the *Humboldt Times* in April, 1859, in which doubt is expressed that a wagon road joining the two towns would ever be able to compete successfully with water communication, the reasons given being that the distance by land was about double that across the bay, and that the nature of the country made the construction and maintenance of a road very expensive.⁴⁷ During most of this early period regular trips were made between these towns by boats on the bay.

An interesting experience is related by Isaac Minor, describing the first carriage ride between Union and Eel River Valley. In order to reach the road leading from Eureka to the valley it was necessary for the party to drive from Union to the ocean beach near the mouth of Mad River, from whence they followed the beach to a point opposite Bucksport. Here they were ferried across the bay,

⁴³ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 131.

⁴⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 2, 1854.

⁴⁵ Averell, *Statement*, MS., 3; Department of the Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 154.

⁴⁶ Archives of County Recorder, *Plot of Union-Bucksport Wagon Road*, 1854.

⁴⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 2, 1859.

and were then able to continue their trip over the regular road to the Eel River Valley.⁴⁸

Trinidad and Union had been connected by a mule trail soon after the founding of these towns. As late as 1854 much of the mail and express of the bay was carried over this trail, although it was characterized as "dangerous and in winter almost impassable."⁴⁹ In 1857 the citizens of Trinidad and the farmers of the region began the agitation for a road, and were successful in constructing a "passable" wagon road as far north as Little River.⁵⁰

Overland Trail and Road, 1853-59. Earlier in this chapter an account has been given of the Sonoma Trail. On account of the long distance through an unsettled mountain region through which the trail had to pass, its importance as a factor in the development of the region was negligible in comparison with the ocean route from San Francisco. Although it later became the route for a wagon road, and in more recent years was followed also by the railroad, during the period of this study neither of these features had progressed beyond the state of agitation and exploration.

In the early issues of the *Humboldt Times*, which began publication in the fall of 1854, the question of an overland road to San Francisco came in for consideration, although at that time it was largely a discussion of the best route. In the issue of September 23, 1854, a letter was published urging a trail along the coast to Meigg's Mill in Mendocino County,⁵¹ and later money was actually subscribed for the exploration of this route.⁵²

Although the coast route had its supporters, especially among those living in that part of the country, the regular trail and such overland travel as there was, went via Eel River. As early as 1856 efforts were made to have a wagon road constructed along this route. Kelsey, one of the earliest to use this trail, was especially interested in the advancement of the route,⁵³ and in June, 1856, money was raised to send him with others to explore a route for a wagon road along Eel River to Long Valley, Mendocino County.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Minor, *Reminiscences*, MS.

⁴⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 9, 1854.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, June 20, 1857.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 23, 1854.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Mar. 1, 1856.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, May 24, 1856.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, June 21, 1856.

The party began the work but were unsuccessful on account of insufficient funds.⁵⁵

Appeal was now made to the state government to aid in the construction of this needed highway. The result was that in the report of the surveyor-general for the year 1856 he recommends the appropriation of \$20,000 for

the survey and location of a road from the town of Petaluma, in Sonoma County, passing through Santa Rosa and Russian River Valleys to the headwaters of Russian and Eel Rivers, and thence with Eel River to Humboldt Bay. Increased facilities for communication between the Northern part of the State and San Francisco, such as this road would afford, are greatly needed. The country along the route is a succession of extensive and fertile valleys and finely timbered tracts, while minerals of a valuable character abound. The country would soon be thickly settled with a permanent population, and the increase of valuable taxable property would make ample return to the State for the cost of the road.⁵⁶

Notwithstanding this recommendation the state legislature did not take any action until the question was again raised in the early part of 1859.⁵⁷ At this time a law was passed granting to the counties involved the state poll tax, excepting that part reserved for school purposes, for a period of two years. This fund was to be expended by the supervisors of the counties in constructing a wagon road from Cloverdale, Sonoma County, through Mendocino, Humboldt, Trinity, and Siskiyou counties to Yreka, Siskiyou County. As far as Long Valley, Mendocino County, the route was definitely prescribed, being the regular route of the overland trail, but from Long Valley, viewers were to be named by the county supervisors to locate the best route for the road.⁵⁸

During the summer of that year, Murray, the county surveyor of Humboldt, and White, the representative of Mendocino County, examined the route from Long Valley to Hydesville, Humboldt County, and reported favorably on the location of a road along this route.⁵⁹ The poll tax,

⁵⁵ *Humboldt Times*, June 28, 1856.

⁵⁶ California Surveyor-general, *Report* 1856 (Jan. 12, 1857), 15.

⁵⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 19, Apr. 2, 1859.

⁵⁸ *Statutes of California*, 1859:323. Act of Apr. 18, 1859.

⁵⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 17, 24, Nov. 12, 1859.

however, was not sufficient to cover the cost of the construction of this road, the result being that nothing more was accomplished at that time.⁶⁰ During the following years the Indian wars prevented any improvements of this kind, and along with other matters the question of the overland wagon road was crowded into the background.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Sept. 8, 1860.

CHAPTER VI

LAND OFFICES AND PREEMPTORS

1850-1865

One of the foremost factors in the question of the frontier has always been the occupation of the public lands. To go into a full discussion of the administration of the public land system does not lie within the province of this study. However, in order to understand rightly the conditions which influence settlement a knowledge of at least the chief features of that policy is necessary, particularly in so far as they deal with the region under consideration.

In the study of the land policy in northwestern California the absence of two features which tend to complicate the problem elsewhere is to be noted: namely, Indian titles to the lands, excepting in the case where reservations were set aside by the government; and private Spanish or Mexican land grants. The theory of the government regarding the Indians was that by the treaty of Guadalupe-Hidalgo the United States government had acquired from Mexico the full title to the lands with the sovereignty of the region.¹ On the other hand, the Spanish and Mexican grants did not extend so far north as to complicate the land problem in this region.²

Although the title to the lands was derived primarily from the federal government, the state also shared in their administration and sale on account of the various grants made to the state by the central government; it will, therefore, be necessary to consider both the general land policy of the federal government at this time and that of the state in so far as it had jurisdiction.

Federal Policy. In order to clear up the title to lands in California an act was passed by Congress, March 3, 1851, appointing a commission of three, to whom all claimants under Spanish and Mexican grants were to present their

¹ *Message from the President . . . at the commencement of the second session of the thirty-second Congress*, Dec. 6, 1852 (Serial 673), 10, 32.

² Along the Sacramento River these grants extended practically continuously as far as Red Bluff, while another, the "San Buenaventura," included the present site of Redding. Along the coast, however, the most northerly was the "Yokaya Rancho," located at or near Ukiah, Mendocino County.

claims within a period of two years. The office of United States surveyor general for California was also created, to survey these as well as the unoccupied lands of the state and make report of these surveys to the General Land Office.³

By the act of March 3, 1853,⁴ Congress provided more completely for the survey and sale of the public lands of the state. This act defined more explicitly the duties of the surveyor general, and prescribed the method of survey of the public lands; it provided that a land office be established within the state, or, if the president saw fit, the state might be divided into two or three land districts; furthermore, it opened the public lands of California to preemption in a manner similar to the terms of the general preemption law of 1841;⁵ and by other provisions certain lands were ceded to the state for educational purposes and for public buildings.

The provisions of this act of 1853 governed the federal land policy almost exclusively in California during the period covered in this chapter. From this time on the federal administration of the public lands in California was entrusted to the United States surveyor general for California and the officials in charge of the various land offices; under the section authorizing the president to subdivide the state into land districts, three districts were formed, with their offices at Marysville, Benicia, and Los Angeles, for the northern, central, and southern portions of the state, respectively.⁶ All of these officers were directly responsible to the General Land Office at Washington.

In 1851 S. D. King, the first surveyor general, began the survey of the public lands in the state.⁷ It soon became evident that the territory around Humboldt Bay formed a region of its own, for on account of the many mountains shutting it off from the interior valley as well as the region farther south it was found practically impossible to use the Mt. Diablo meridian, which governed all of central and northeastern California. In November, 1852, it was there-

³ *Statutes at large*, IX, 631-633. Act of Mar. 3, 1851. For appropriations see *ibid.*, IX, 617; X, 91. The office of United States surveyor general for California must not be confused with that of the state surveyor general.

⁴ *Ibid.*, X, 244.

⁵ *Statutes at Large*, V, 453-458. Act of Sept. 4, 1841.

⁶ Donaldson, *The public domain*, 173.

⁷ Surveyor general for California, *Report, Sept. 30, 1851*, with President's annual message, 1851 (Serial 636, Doc. 2), 46-49.

fore recommended that a new meridian and base line be established in the vicinity of Humboldt Bay.⁸ This was done during the next year, Mt. Pierce, in the Bear River Ridge, being taken as the central point of the new survey district, known as the Humboldt district.⁹ The survey of this new district was attended with great difficulty on account of the rough mountains and heavy redwood forests, and would have progressed much more slowly had it not been for the assistance of the settlers.¹⁰ In 1858, on account of the hostility of the Indians of the region, the work for the time being was entirely discontinued.¹¹

In the earlier years the Humboldt region was a part of the land district, having its central office at Benicia; but in 1857, when that office was removed to San Francisco, Humboldt was made a part of the Marysville district.¹² This was a great inconvenience to the settlers of the region, and the agitation for a new land district, with an office on Humboldt Bay, became strong. As early as 1854 a resolution had been presented to Congress inquiring into the expediency of forming a new land district in this part of the state.¹³ No action was taken at that time, but this new agitation was more successful, and by the act of March 29, 1858, the president was authorized to form three additional land districts in California.¹⁴ In October of that year the Humboldt Land Office was open for business.¹⁵

The Preemption Law. The lands sold by the national government during the period before 1860 were disposed of either by cash sales or were sold to settlers under the preemption laws. Before the act of September 4, 1841, which

⁸ Surveyor general for California, *Report*, Nov. 10, 1852, in letter from the Secretary of the Interior, Jan. 14, 1853 (Serial 676, Doc. 14), 7.

⁹ This district, which must not be confused with the Humboldt Land District, included that part of northwestern California lying west of the Coast Range Mountains. *Message of the President of the United States . . . at the commencement of the second session of the thirty-third Congress*. Part III (Serial 748), map 7. Donaldson, *Public domain*, 181.

¹⁰ Surveyor general for California, *Report*, Sept. 28, 1854, with President's annual message, 1854 (Serial 746 and 777), 207-208.

¹¹ *Humboldt Times*, July 24, 1858. Surveyor general for California, *Annual report*, 1857-1858, accompanying President's annual message, 1858 (Serial 997), 302.

¹² *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 21, 1857.

¹³ *Journal of the Senate of the United States . . . first session of the thirty-third Congress*, 1853-1854 (Serial 689), 324.

¹⁴ *Statutes at Large*, XI., 262.

¹⁵ The letter from the Commissioner of the General Land Office establishing the Humboldt Land Office is dated May 17, 1858, and directs that after July 1, the office should be opened at Humboldt. Archives of Eureka Land Office, *Commissioners' letters*, 1858. *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 9, 30, Nov. 13, 1858; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 127.

granted preemption rights to homeseekers, the policy of the government had been to sell the lands directly to any that were prepared to pay the purchase price. By the act of April 28, 1820, the land system was made more uniform than under previous laws, and long remained the basis for administering the public domain. It fixed the minimum price at which the public lands should be sold at \$1.25 cash per acre. The lands when offered for sale were to be sold to the highest bidder at public sale at a price not less than the minimum rate per acre. All lands remaining unsold at the end of the period of public sale were then subject to private sale at the minimum rate.¹⁶

Under the terms of the act of September 4, 1841, any person who was the head of a family, or a single man over twenty-one years of age, if he were a citizen of the United States or had declared his intention of becoming one, was permitted to take up any amount of public land up to 160 acres at the price of \$1.25 per acre. The chief contingency upon which the land could be obtained under such favorable conditions was that the purchaser should agree to reside upon and improve the land purchased. By the act of March 3, 1853,¹⁷ the government lands in California were offered for sale under the regulations governing such sales, and were made subject to the provisions of the preemption law of 1841. All mineral lands or those claimed under a Spanish or Mexican grant were excluded from the application of this law.

As the result of this act a very large part of the public land that was disposed of by the national government in California during this period was sold to settlers under the provisions granting preemption rights. This was due to the fact that an actual settler might by this method select and acquire a piece of land at the minimum price even before the land was placed upon the market at public sale.

The provisions of the act of 1841 applied only to lands already surveyed; but since the rapid immigration into California had caused the public lands to be settled far in advance of the public survey it was necessary to make provisions to meet this condition. One of the characteristic features, therefore, of the act of 1853 was that settlers were

¹⁶ Donaldson, *Public domain*, 196-208.

¹⁷ *Statutes at Large*, V, 453-458, X, 244.

to be allowed to occupy and hold unsurveyed lands for one year after the passage of the act, a provision which later was still further extended.¹⁸ The process of securing a patent under the preemption laws differed according to whether or not the settlement was made on land already offered for sale, as well as whether or not it had been surveyed. On land offered for sale the applicant was required to file at the district land office the declaratory statement of his settlement within thirty days from the date of said settlement; and within one year from the date of settlement must appear at the land office and make proof of his actual residence on and cultivation of the tract. At this time final payment was made for the land.

Where the lands had not yet been offered for sale the claimant was to file his declaratory statement within three months and make final proof and payment within thirty-three months after the date of settlement. Whenever the land was yet unsurveyed the statement was required to be filed within three months after the plats of survey had been filed at the district land office, and thirty months more were allowed for final proof and payment.¹⁹

In his declaratory statement the applicant described the land by township and section division and gave the date of his settlement, declaring it to be his purpose to claim the land under the provisions of the preemption law. At the time of making final proof he was required to supply an affidavit that he had fulfilled the requirements of the law and was legally entitled to the land claimed. To support this statement two witnesses were required to take oath affirming that of the claimant, stating that no other person had resided on the land and was entitled to the right of preemption; that the claimant had made settlement upon the land in person and that he had made it his exclusive home during the dates given; and that since the settlement he had plowed, fenced, and cultivated a stated number of acres of the land.²⁰

¹⁸ *Statutes at Large*, X, 268, Mar. 1, 1854. By this act the time was extended for two years only, but once having been adopted the policy continued in practice.

¹⁹ *Revised statutes of the United States relating to the public lands*, June 17, 1875, sections 2264-2267.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 131-133, give the forms for these statements and affidavits as required in 1876. They were practically the same as the forms at the earlier dates discussed in this chapter.

After making final proof the claimant paid the required amount, \$1.25 per acre, or if along railroad lines, \$2.50 per acre.²¹ This was either paid in cash, military bounty warrants, or various kinds of scrip granted by the government. These conditions having been fulfilled the documents were forwarded to the General Land Office, and if found satisfactory the patent was issued.

While the preemption laws were very liberal in granting lands for agricultural purposes, there were, nevertheless, certain limitations upon the lands subject to preemption. Probably the most important of these restrictions were those withholding all land claimed under a Spanish or Mexican grant, all mineral lands, the sections in each township given to the state for school purposes, and those lands located within incorporated cities or already selected for town sites. In the case of towns on the public domain Congress had made provision in a statute passed in 1844, according to which the officials of incorporated cities, or the judges of the county court, in case the place was unincorporated, were allowed to enter in behalf of the municipality any lands not exceeding three hundred and twenty acres, if these lands were actually occupied as a town site. These were to be held in trust for the town and were to be disposed of according to the laws of the particular state in which they were situated.²² Under this act several of the early towns of the Humboldt Bay region received the title to their lands.²³

State Policy. As mentioned earlier in the chapter the administration of the public lands was shared also by the local state governments. Instead of the earlier policy of giving federal appropriations for internal improvements, the national government later adopted the plan of ceding to the states a certain part of the public lands to be used by them for this purpose. By the act of September 4, 1841, the nine states named in the act and each new state on its admission into the Union were given 500,000 acres of land. These lands were to be sold by the state at a price not lower than that asked by the federal government for its public lands, the proceeds to be used for internal improvements.²⁴

²¹ *Ibid.*, 117.

²² *Statutes at Large*, V, 657.

²³ Land office records, Eureka. These towns were Eureka, Arcata, Bucksport and Trinidad.

²⁴ *Statutes at Large*, V, 455. Act of Sept. 4, 1841, sec. 8.

By the act of September 28, 1850, Congress granted to the states all swamp and overflowed lands "made unfit thereby for cultivation,"²⁵ and by the act of March 3, 1853, further lands were granted to the states for school and other purposes.²⁶ In accordance with an early policy the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections of each township were granted to a state for the benefit of its public schools, for a university two whole townships or seventy-two sections were granted, and two additional sections were donated for public buildings.

The location and sale of these lands was a problem left for the state administrative machinery to solve. The greater part of these lands, namely, the swamp and overflowed lands and the school township sections, would apparently be definitely located as soon as the United States surveys had been made; but in the case of the other lands no attempt was made by the federal government to locate them beyond the stipulation that this should be done by the agents of the state. However, these swamp and overflowed lands and the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections did not become the property of the states without considerable effort on the part of state officials. For some years the controversy went on between the two sets of officials as to the proper location of the limits of the swamp and overflowed lands; while in the case of the school sections, whenever settlers had already placed their claims upon the lands before these had been surveyed, the federal government reserved the right to sell these lands giving to the states other lands in lieu of those sold. The selection of these lieu lands was another duty resting on the state administration.

By the act of April 17, 1850, the California Legislature attacked this problem. The office of state surveyor general was formed, and among other duties he was given general oversight of the public lands belonging to the state.²⁷ Beyond the establishment of this office no other machinery was established by the state for the administration of its public lands until 1858; during this time the duties pertaining to the land questions either fell to the surveyor general or were delegated by special acts to other state officials. By the act of April 10, 1858, the state land office was created

²⁵ *Statutes at large*, IX, 519-520.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, X, 244-248.

²⁷ *Statutes of California*, 1850:256.

with the surveyor general as ex officio register. To this office was given the full administration of the land system, viz: "the ascertaining, protecting and managing the title and claim of the state to any lands within its limits, derived by grants from the United States, or in any other manner."²⁸

The swamp and overflowed lands and the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections were sold by the state directly, but the other lands were located and sold through the United States land offices, either by state officials appointed for the purpose or by individuals authorized to make the purchase. Since the method varied with the kinds of land in question this feature of the state policy may best be considered in connection with each of these classes.

The Five Hundred Thousand Acre Grant. At the time of the admission of California into the Union it received by virtue of the act of September 4, 1841, a grant of five hundred thousand acres.²⁹ This had been set aside by the constitution of the state for the support of the common schools and therefore became known as the "state school lands."³⁰ The legislation required for the location and sale of these lands was provided in the act of May 3, 1852.³¹ This act provided for the disposal of the lands through the sale of warrants by the state treasurer at the rate of \$2.00 per acre. Payment might be made in cash, state scrip, or state bonds; and the warrants could be located "upon any vacant and unappropriated lands belonging to the United States within the State of California, subject to such location." The warrants were issued for amounts of either 160 or 320 acres, but owing to a provision of the act of Congress the state was required to locate not less than 320 acres at one time. Further provisions specified that locations should not be made upon lands "occupied and improved by actual settlers unless made by the owners of the improvements;" and no person was to be permitted to purchase warrants for more than 640 acres, and must make affidavit that the lands were for permanent settlement.

This law was the object of attack both by the surveyor general and by the settlers who had taken up land under

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 1858:127.

²⁹ *Ante*, 83, n. 24.

³⁰ Constitution of 1849, Art. IX, sec. 2.

³¹ *Statutes of California*, 1852:41.

the preemption laws. The surveyor general pointed out defects in the law that made fraud possible, and that the restrictions to prevent monopoly were ineffective. The law did not require the warrants to be canceled or even surrendered when they had been once used, and they therefore might again be located in another county; furthermore, while the law restricted the sale of warrants to 640 acres to one man, there was nothing to prevent his buying as many warrants from private parties as he desired and could pay for after they had been issued by the state.³²

In Humboldt County prior to September 1, 1853, eighteen warrants had been located, amounting to 4000 acres. Of these, 2240 acres had been located by Dr. Jonathan Clark, of Eureka, and 960 acres by Ryan, Duff & Company, a lumber corporation.³³ Believing that the sale of public lands in such an extensive manner was prejudicial to the rights of the actual settler, meetings of protest were held in the town of Union, the county seat of the region. At one of these meetings the following resolutions were adopted:³⁴

Protest of the citizens of Humboldt County
against the law authorizing the location of School
Land Warrants.

I. Resolved, That we view the law passed by the Legislature of California, respecting the location and sale of School Land Warrants, unjust and contrary to all laws passed by Congress, as it gives the speculator the right of purchasing and holding any quantity of land, while the actual settler can pre-empt one quarter section only, and is compelled to occupy the same.

II. Resolved, That we will aid and protect all pre-emptors in maintaining possession of any public land belonging to the United States, although they may have been covered previously by School Warrants, unless the owner of such School Warrants holds one quarter section, and occupies the same.

III. Resolved, That the Vigilance Committee be instructed to stop any further location of School Warrants in Union Township, and that our fellow citizens of Humboldt County and the State generally, be requested to act in concert with us in putting an end to the location of School Warrants.

³² California surveyor general, *Report*, 1852:16-18; 1853:4-5; 1858:23-24.

³³ *Ibid.*, 1858, 49-81; archives of County Recorder, *Records of County Clerk, Book A*. Not all the land located by Clark was for himself; he conducted a real estate business, and located lands for others. *Humboldt Times*, May 12, 1855.

³⁴ *San Francisco Herald*, Oct. 23, 1853; *Auburn, Placer Herald*, Oct. 29, 1853.

IV. Resolved, That the Secretary of the meeting should prepare copies of these resolutions, and send them to every settlement on this Bay, and also to the leading papers of San Francisco, to arouse the indignation of every farmer, settler and well-wisher of California, against the encroachments of land monopoly, which will retard the settlement of its arable land.

V. Resolved, That a petition should be circulated in the county for signatures, praying congress not to sanction the law passed by the Legislature of California creating School Warrants, and laying them indiscriminately on the Public Lands throughout California.

H. F. Janes, Chairman.

A. Eiswald, Secretary.

Union, Humboldt
County, Sept. 6, 1853.

What the actual effect of these resolutions was can not be definitely ascertained, but inferences may be drawn from the fact that the records do not show further location of school warrants in any such extensive manner in Humboldt County after this protest.³⁵ At the beginning of the next session of the state legislature, the governor in his annual message spoke of the necessity of passing legislation "to prevent a monopoly of these lands," and advised their selection by agents of the state.³⁶ Notwithstanding this opposition the act of 1852 remained in force until 1858, when, in accordance with the idea suggested by the governor, the law authorizing school warrants was repealed, and the location of the remainder of these lands was placed in the hands of state agents.³⁷ Up to this time the state had disposed of nearly one-half of the grant, 838 warrants having been sold calling for 160 acres each, and 324 for 320 acres; making in all 237,760 acres, and leaving a balance of 262,240 acres.³⁸

The policy of selection by a state agent of lands due the state had been adopted in part by the legislature as early as 1855; but the sale of school warrants continued until 1858, when state agents were given full charge of the locating of the lands under all the grants.³⁹ Under the new act the

³⁵ During September, 1853, Clark located three warrants for 160 acres each, which were the last located by him in Humboldt County. About thirteen other warrants were located in the county, but they all conformed strictly to the restrictions of the law. California surveyor general, *Report*, 1858:49-81.

³⁶ *The Journal of the Senate*, 5th session (1854), 25.

³⁷ *Statutes of California*, 1858:248. Act of Apr. 23, 1858.

³⁸ California surveyor general, *Report*, 1858:22.

³⁹ *Statutes of California*, 1855:281, the act of May 7, 1855. The act of 1852 had also been amended by an act Apr. 30, 1857. *Statutes of California*, 1857:356.

governor was authorized to commission a locating agent for each of the United States land districts. These men were to act either in behalf of those settlers who had not yet acquired a title to their lands under the preemption law and were willing to avail themselves of this means to obtain the title, or they were to locate lands for others who might wish to purchase lands directly from the state. The price asked was \$1.25 per acre, the minimum price asked by the federal government, and many who had already submitted their declaratory statements under the preemption law withdrew their claims and purchased their lands by "state selection," for in this manner they did not impair their right to take up other lands under the preemption laws. In order to prevent monopoly the agent was forbidden to locate more than 320 acres "either directly or indirectly for any one person."

The act of 1858 proved very popular, as may be seen from the fact that during the remaining months of that year practically all of the unsold portion of the 500,000 acres was selected for purchasers.⁴⁰ Of this amount, 68,729.81 acres, more than one-fourth of it, were located in the Humboldt Land District.⁴¹ So extensive had been the sales under this act that during the years following, notwithstanding the fact that a few of these purchasers failed to perfect their titles, no further effort was made to sell these lands, the forfeited lands together with the small amount remaining unsold being kept as a margin to safeguard against difficulties which might arise from outstanding school warrants.⁴²

Other State Selections. The act of 1858 also provided that all the lands belonging to the state by virtue of the various federal grants should be sold through the state locating agents in the same manner as the school lands. Of these grants the seventy-two sections for a seminary of learning were included in the provisions of the law of 1858, while the ten sections for public buildings were placed on the market in a similar manner the following year.⁴³ As in the case of the 500,000 acre grant, since, in fact, they were a part of the same sale, these lands also sold very rapidly, with the result that by the

⁴⁰ California surveyor general, *Report*, 1858:22. At this date the figures were yet incomplete.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 1859:7.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 1860:4, and subsequent reports.

⁴³ *Statutes of California*, 1859:33. Act of Feb. 18, 1859.

end of the year 1860 all but about 2000 had either been sold or applied for.⁴⁴

The Sixteenth and Thirty-sixth Sections. The township section grant to states, comprising the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections of each township, which has already been mentioned, was in many ways closely associated with the grants analyzed above. This grant was the largest of all since it gave to the state one-eighteenth part of the public domain located within its borders. By the terms of the act these sections were "granted to the State for the purposes of public schools in each township."⁴⁵ In another clause, as already stated, it was provided that when any settlement by the erection of a dwelling house or the cultivation of any portion of the land had been made upon these sections prior to survey, or when they should be reserved for public uses or taken by private claims, other lands were to be selected by the proper state authorities in lieu of these in a manner laid down in a former statute.⁴⁶ The administration of these township lands entailed little trouble except in those cases where because of preoccupation it became necessary for the state to select other lands. In order to acquire and dispose of the land under these conditions it was necessary: first, that a judicious selection be made, in order that land of value be secured; second, that some method be provided to sell the land in a profitable manner.

At the beginning of the session of the legislature in 1854 the governor and superintendent of public instruction urged "energetic action" toward an early location of the remainder of the 500,000 acre grant as well as the lieu lands in the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections.⁴⁷ In his report in December, 1854, the surveyor general further urged the prompt selection of these lands as the settlers were already far in advance of the United States surveyors.⁴⁸ As a result of these remonstrances the legislature at this session took action regarding such lands. This law provided that when settlements had been made upon these lands or they were covered by valid Spanish grants the surveyor

⁴⁴ California surveyor general, *Report*, 1860:4.

⁴⁵ *Statutes at Large*, X, 246. Act of Mar. 3, 1853.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, IV, 179. Act of May 20, 1826.

⁴⁷ Governor's special message and report of the superintendent of public instruction, Jan. 31, 1854.

⁴⁸ California surveyor general, *Report*, 1854:9.

general was to select other lands in the same quantity; and if in making this selection, unoccupied lands could not be found in the same township selection was to be made from an adjoining township.⁴⁹

The superintendent of public instruction took exception to this act, claiming that in restricting the selection of these lands to the same or adjoining township the legislature had been unjust to the public school system of the state, since the laws of Congress merely restricted this selection to the "unappropriated public land within the *land district*."⁵⁰ He therefore urged modification of this part of the act. In his next annual report he again urged amendment of the act, and further recommended that these lands be placed on sale in order that the people of each township might come into "active ownership" of the lands and receive the proceeds from their sales.⁵¹

In its actual operation the law of 1855 did not prove effective. The legislature had failed to make any appropriation covering the expense entailed; the act required the cooperation of too many officials to be efficient; and, furthermore, the state officers were unable to obtain full information regarding the exact status of the United States survey as a basis upon which to work. In 1856 selections had been made in two counties, but after that time no others were reported.⁵²

In January, 1858, A. J. Moulder made his first report as superintendent of public instruction. In this he urged that the school lands be placed on sale, and that the proceeds of the sales be thrown into a general school fund to be used for schools anywhere within the state, for he considered it both inconvenient and unjust that the money should be retained by the individual township.⁵³ The legislature was not convinced that it lay within its power to create a common fund from the proceeds of these land sales, but did pass an act placing the lands on the market.⁵⁴ This act provided that in congressional townships having fifteen or more white families upon the petition of a majority of these

⁴⁹ *Statutes of California*, 1855:281-282. Act of May 7, 1855.

⁵⁰ Superintendent of Public Instruction, *5th Annual Report* (January, 1856), 5-6.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, *6th Annual Report* (December, 1856), 7-8.

⁵² California surveyor general, *Report*, 1856:7-9; 1857:12-13; Superintendent of Public Instruction, *6th Annual Report*, 7-8.

⁵³ Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Report*, 1857:8-9.

⁵⁴ *Senate journal*, 9th session, 113-114.

families the board of supervisors of the county were authorized to sell the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections or their lieu lands. After three months' public notice they were to be sold in lots from forty to one hundred and sixty acres in size to the highest bidder above the minimum price of \$2 per acre. The proceeds were to constitute a permanent school fund for the use of the schools in that township.⁵⁵ By another act passed at nearly the same time the selection of the lieu lands was placed in the hands of the state locating agent, if the board of supervisors of the county considered this desirable.⁵⁶

In his annual report for 1858, Superintendent Moulder declared it to be a "fatal error" to consider that the proceeds from these land sales could be used only for the schools of a given township, and supported his contention by showing how the law granting the lands to California differed from grants to other states, which had specified that the lands were granted to the "inhabitants" of the township. He further criticized the law because it provided for such complicated machinery, evidence of which was seen from the fact that during the eight months in which the act had been in operation not one section of the lands had been sold.⁵⁷

The recommendation urging a general school fund was repeated at the opening of legislature in 1860,⁵⁸ at which time it received the endorsement of both houses of that body but failed to be signed by the governor.⁵⁹ At the next session, however, it was taken up again, and this time became a law. This act not only provided that the proceeds of sales of school lands should be placed in a state school fund, to be apportioned semiannually among the various counties, but it also provided more latitude in the selection of the lieu lands; no longer was the agent to be restricted to the unoccupied lands in the same or adjoining township, although he was instructed to locate the lands whenever practicable in the same county.⁶⁰

Under the act of April 26, 1858, which was replaced by this new act, eleven counties had reported sales of these school

⁵⁵ *Statutes of California*, 1858:318-321. Act of Apr. 26, 1858.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 1858:248-251. Act of Apr. 23, 1858.

⁵⁷ Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Report*, 1858 (January, 1859), 17-22.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 1859 (January, 1860), 15-28.

⁵⁹ *Report of [Senate] Committee on Education*, Mar. 12, 1860; Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Report*, 1860 (January, 1861), 11.

⁶⁰ *Statutes of California*, 1861:218-221. Act of Apr. 22, 1861.

sections which amounted to 18,720 acres, of which 380 were located in Humboldt County. In ten of the counties no sales had been made. Under the new law both the selection of lands and the sales greatly increased, for within eight months locations for 95,558.13 acres had been approved, while others awaiting approval brought the total up to 163,463.13 acres.⁶¹

Swamp and Overflowed Lands. In 1849 Congress made to the State of Louisiana, for the purpose of constructing levees and drains to reclaim the swamps, a grant of "the whole of those swamp and overflowed lands, which may be or are found unfit for cultivation."⁶² This was followed the next year by an act making a similar grant to Arkansas and to "each of the other States of the Union in which such swamp and overflowed lands . . . may be situated."⁶³ The object of the grant was, of course, to secure the reclamation of the seemingly worthless land, thus improving the sanitary condition of the district and incidentally enhancing the value of the surrounding public lands.

According to the act these lands were to be segregated from the other lands by the United States surveyors at the time the lands were first surveyed; and upon application of the state governments to the secretary of the interior he was instructed to issue patents to the states for the lands thus segregated. Although the provisions of the law seem simple, difficulties soon arose in its administration, especially as to what constituted swamp and overflowed lands. The state officials of California claimed that the lines of the United States survey were incorrect and unfair to the state, in that they were invariably run during the summer and fall when there was little or no swamp land, whereas during the wet season these so-called dry lands would be flooded so as to make them incapable of cultivation.⁶⁴

The policy regarding the disposal of these lands was first taken up by the governor in his annual message in January, 1852, in which he proposed that they be donated

⁶¹ California surveyor general, *Report*, 1861:9-11.

⁶² *Statutes at Large*, IX, 352-353. Act of Mar. 2, 1849. A good brief account of this grant is given in Donaldson, *Public domain*, 219-220.

⁶³ *Statutes at Large*, IX, 519-520. Act of Sept. 28, 1850.

⁶⁴ For indications of this disagreement see California surveyor general, *Report*, 1856: 12-14; 1857:13-15; 1859:11-21.

to actual settlers;⁶⁵ but in spite of the repeated recommendations of the governor no action was taken by the legislature until 1855.⁶⁶ In this act it was provided that the swamp lands be placed on sale at one dollar per acre, payable in cash, state warrants, or on a credit plan. No purchaser was to be allowed more than three hundred and twenty acres, and lands within certain specified limits of towns or cities or along the Sacramento River were excluded from sale.⁶⁷ Sales were, however, not confined to lands surveyed and segregated by the United States officials, but were based upon the survey of the county surveyor. Under the operation of this act 338,734 acres were sold in the state, and of these 5157 acres were located in Humboldt County.⁶⁸

In 1858 this act was superseded by another, which, although similar in its general provisions, contained some important modifications in details. The restrictions regarding the lands offered for sale were made less rigid, the lands along the Sacramento River and much nearer the cities and towns being placed on sale. The amount of lands sold to one individual remained the same, as did also the price, but no provision was made for other than cash payments, and each purchaser was restricted to one-half mile frontage on any bay or navigable stream.⁶⁹ As might be expected the chief result of this law was the sale of those lands which had been excluded from sale under the former act. During the year that this act was in force 65,837 acres were sold. Of these about 19,000 acres were located along the Sacramento River and 402 acres in Humboldt County.⁷⁰

In 1859 the regulations governing the sale of the swamp lands were again modified; instead of being limited to 320 acres one person was permitted to purchase as much as 640 acres; and provision was made for payment on a credit plan, as had been allowed in the act of 1855.⁷¹ During the

⁶⁵ *Senate journal*, 3d session (1852), 15; 4th session (1853), 23; 5th session (1854), 23.

⁶⁶ *Statutes of California*, 1855:189-191. Act of Apr. 28, 1855.

⁶⁷ These were lands within ten miles of San Francisco or San Diego; five miles of Sacramento, Marysville, or Oakland; one mile of any incorporated town or of the Sacramento River up to the Feather River.

⁶⁸ California surveyor general, *Report*, 1858:16-17.

⁶⁹ *Statutes of California*, 1858:198-202. Act of Apr. 21, 1858. Exemptions now were: lands within the limits of the city and county of San Francisco; within five miles of San Diego and Oakland; or within the limits of any incorporated town.

⁷⁰ California surveyor general, *Report*, 1858:16-17; 1859:5.

⁷¹ *Statutes of California*, 1859: 340-342. Act of Apr. 18, 1859.

years immediately following this act the sales of swamp lands greatly increased. There were 109,309 acres sold in the state during the closing months of 1859; in 1860 this rose to nearly 222,000 acres; and in 1861 reached the highest mark for several years with 236,696.73 acres. A corresponding increase in sales of these lands is also to be noted in the Humboldt region, for 5,029.30 acres were sold during the three years and a half following the passage of the act, making a total of 9919 acres sold in the county under the swamp and overflowed land acts up to the year 1862.⁷²

Notwithstanding the fact that the state had continued to make provision for the sale of these lands, and had actually sold nearly 100,000 acres under the various laws,⁷³ the title to none of these lands had yet been made over to the state until after 1860. The problem of securing to the state the lands of this grant occupied the attention of the authorities of the state land office for several years. They will be taken up in a subsequent chapter.⁷⁴

⁷² California surveyor general, *Report*, 1859:5; 1860:9; 1861:4-5; 1862:41.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 1861:5, shows the total to be 894,169 acres.

⁷⁴ Even as late as 1866 this title remained unrecognized. California surveyor general, *Report*, 1865-1867:10 *et seq.*

CHAPTER VII

THE EXPANSION OF SETTLEMENT AND THE BEGINNING OF AGRICULTURE, 1850-1860

Having considered the policy of both the national and state government regarding the public lands we turn to the practical application of the question, how these lands were occupied by the settlers, the extent and nature of the immigration into the region, and the early advances made in agricultural pursuits.

The Early Settlements, 1850-1853. During the early period of occupation of frontier regions man is naturally more dependent upon his surroundings than at any later time. As has been noted, the early towns in this region were located upon or near what, to the earliest settlers, appeared to be the best harbors from which they could carry on trade with the mines. After the first flush of excitement regarding the mines and town site speculation had subsided, the agricultural lands came into importance and greatly influenced the spread of settlement. The heavily timbered tracts which bordered the bay and stretched as a great belt along the interior were during these years both aid and hindrance to settlement. That part which lay near the water's edge was early seen to be of great commercial value, but in more remote sections such land was avoided, for the heavy growth of timber rendered clearing of land unprofitable when other lands lay near at hand. The opposition of the natives was not a factor of much importance during the earlier years, but as time went on the whites mistreated them and encroached upon their lands, and they became a very important element in retarding the spread of settlement, for a time even causing the frontier line to be greatly contracted. Consideration will be given to this problem in subsequent chapters.

Trinidad. The towns around the bay were naturally the centers about which the earliest agricultural settlements gathered. During its early years Trinidad was looked upon as a place of great promise, and at this time settlements extended from it as a center both north and south along the

coast; claims were filed to the north around Gold Bluffs and along the Trinity trail, and to the south as far as Little River and Dow's Prairie where they were met by the settlements from Humboldt Bay.¹ The name Luffenholtz, near Little River, is still a witness to one of these early settlers who built a mill in that place.² Agricultural lands around Trinidad were neither extensive nor productive on account of the broken nature of the country and the heavy growth of timber which came close to the shore line. With the decline of the town after the first boom, settlement around it also ceased to be a great consideration. Although this region was cut by the Humboldt Meridian line, run by the United States surveyors in 1854, it was not divided into sections until 1867.³

Humboldt Bay Settlements. The next settlement in point of time, and probably first in importance, was located at the head of Humboldt Bay, around Union and on the Mad River bottom lands. That these lands were of great value to the agriculturist is evident from the fact that although they have been cultivated continuously since that time the productivity of the land has not been materially reduced. Most of the agricultural lands of this region were occupied by permanent settlers as early as 1853.⁴

Owing to the fact that heavy timber came close to the water's edge from a point near Union nearly to Elk River there was little opportunity for agriculture in this district, a feature which had tended to retard the advancement of Eureka before the lumber and commercial interests became important factors. To the south of Eureka the highlands recede farther from the bay, leaving an alluvial plain along the lower portions of Elk River and Salmon Creek. These lands were more free from the heavy timber and being also excellent agricultural lands during these early years, they formed the basis for many claims.

¹ Archives of Humboldt County Recorder, *Preemption Claims, Klamath Co.*, 1851-1853.

² Luffelholz, as the name was originally, settled here in the spring of 1851. *Overland Monthly*, II (1883), 278.

³ Archives of the United States Land Office, Eureka, *Plat books*. Since the early preemptions north of Mad River were upon unsurveyed land they were described only by metes and bounds, and have not been included in the map on p. 101.

⁴ These statements are based upon a study of the Land Office records in Eureka, more especially the original files and the *Abstract of Declaratory Statements*. *Ante*, 82. Other statements are the result of the personal observation of the writer through four years of residence in the region. See map, page 101.

At the extreme southern end of the bay, dividing its waters from Eel River Valley, the high lands extend to the ocean, forming a table land of moderate height, known for this reason as Table Bluff. Since this land was not only valuable for agricultural purposes but also formed a connecting link between two other important districts it early became the center of a small settlement.

Eel River Valley. The lower stretches of Eel River, with its broad, fertile valley, proved an attraction to the seeker for good agricultural lands. As early as 1850 settlers had begun to take up claims from these lands, and by the fall of 1851 McKee found numerous settlers throughout the valley.⁵ While scattering claims were located at various places in the valley, the chief center of settlement seems to have been upon the higher lands near Van Duzen River and Yager Creek, the site of the later town of Hydesville, and farther down the river at the present Rohnerville and Fortuna. Even during these early years settlements were also made on isolated tracts when they lay on trails leading to the mines or offered special opportunity for agriculture or stock-raising. Chief among these should be mentioned Angel's Ranch, settled in 1851, and Kleiser's place on Kneeland Prairie, located about the same time.⁶

The Effect of Governmental Policy on Settlement. When the first settlements were made in the region around Humboldt Bay the question of land titles was still in a very unsettled state, due to the unorganized condition of the state government; nevertheless, the early settlers followed the customs they had been used to in their former homes and staked out their claims, relying on future legislation to recognize them as valid. This method was to some extent approved by the act of April 11, 1850, in which the state legislature declared that the occupation of lands which were not over mines conferred a title to the occupant; it was provided that the claim, not to exceed 160 acres, was to be marked off so that the boundaries could be readily traced; and unless actually occupied it must have improvements to the value of \$100.

⁵ LaMotte, *Statement*, MS., 10, speaks of a man named Friar as being the first settler in the valley; the declaratory statement of William Taylor shows him to have settled near Rohnerville in December, 1850. For conditions in 1851 see *Alta California*, Aug. 26, 1851; and Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 126.

⁶ Averell, *Statement*, MS., 4; Lindsey, *Statement*, MS., 3; *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 21, 1854.

If the claimant failed to occupy or cultivate his claim for a period of three months, he was to be considered as having abandoned his right to the land.⁷ This act served as the basis for settlement until the public lands were opened for preemption privilege by the act of Congress of 1853.⁸

The pioneer settlers were not only hampered by the inability to secure full title to the land; but the absence of any public survey, especially that of the United States surveyors, made it difficult to describe lands in order to record or transfer them. In the absence of any township or section lines all lands were described by metes and bounds, the difficulties of which method may readily be seen from the following notice of preemption taken from the official records of Eureka:⁹

Julius W. Graham made a clame of Preemption on one Quarter Section of Land. on The 12th day of May A D 1850 Situated on the warters of Humbolt Harbour and State of California and bounden as follows. viz Commencing at Wm H Sansbury's. S. E. corner. runing Thence one half mile N. to a read wood tree. Thence one half mile E. to a Matharone tree. Thence one half mile. S to a spruce pine tree Thence one half mile W to the place of begining

Said clame of Preemption was runn of and marked in presence of

Arter Graham
Andrew. Worford.

Notwithstanding the confusion due to the absence of authentic lines of survey other difficulties presented themselves to the settler when the survey had at last been made, for while in most cases the settler had endeavored to run the lines of his claim north and south, this had not always been done, but even when it had there could be no certainty as to where the township and section lines would finally fall. These lines not infrequently cut through those of the original claim, leaving some choice lands or valuable improvements in the same section division with that of a neighboring claim. The preemption law did not allow claims to be laid on section divisions smaller than forty acres, although it did provide that when one division was shared between two claimants

⁷ *Statutes of California*, 1850:203.

⁸ *Ante*, 81.

⁹ From the original preemption notice found in the archives of Humboldt County Recorder, *Record Book, No. 1, Trinity Co.*

the person holding the larger portion of land or the most valuable improvements was to have first right to the forty acres.¹⁰

In order to avoid the confusion due to the shifting of the boundary lines in the attempt to make them conform to the United States survey, it was not uncommon for the settlers to agree among themselves to abide by the old property lines even though they secured their patents from the government in accordance with the new lines of survey. The following agreement, signed by twenty-eight members of the Bucksport Land Claim Association dated October 1, 1854, may be taken as an example.¹¹ After a preamble, which set forth the purpose of the association, it was agreed:

First - In view of abiding by the government survey each Pre-emption claimant who becomes a party to this agreement shall keep his own claim boundaries and improvements in general provided such claim contains no more than one hundred and sixty acres.

Second - For the purpose of effecting this object each of the undersigned pledge mutually and bind ourselves, heirs, e&c., e&c., as above specified to cede & recede as the several cases may require in order to carry out this agreement so soon as our titles are obtained. And furthermore each of the undersigned do hereby mutually release, quit claim sell and convey and forever warrant unto the rightful owner thereof, according to the spirit and intent of this agreement as specified in the first article any portion of another's claim or improvements that may fall within our boundaries as established at the land office, so that each shall keep essentially his own claim as at present established and remain forever in quiet and peaceful possession of the same, any variation of government lines to the contrary notwithstanding.

Third. The more effectually to carry out the objects of this agreement, the parties thereto shall elect seven persons from their number, who shall constitute a board of arbitration before which board all matters of disagreement and differences of opinion in regard to the details shall be presented and their decision shall be final.

During the years previous to the opening of the Humboldt Land Office there was no way to secure a full title to the

¹⁰ *Statutes at Large*, V, 453-458.

¹¹ Archives of County Recorder, *Miscellany*, Book A, 19.

public land in the Humboldt region except by applying to the land office at Benicia, or later at Marysville. These offices were so far distant that it was both inconvenient and expensive to perfect the title, whereas after the settler had once filed his declaratory statement, and was in actual possession of the land, he at least held first claim to the title.¹² After 1858, when the land office had been established at Humboldt, circumstances were different; from that time land titles were placed on a sounder basis, for with the barrier of distance removed efforts were made to secure patents for the land from the United States government.¹³

In the matter of lands located by school land warrants¹⁴ in the Humboldt region the greater part of these warrants had been located by Clark and others on the lands around Eureka and along the bay to the south of that place. Other warrants had been located by Ryan, Duff & Company, on the timberlands on Ryan Slough, and still others in more or less scattered places. During the years immediately following the state selection act of 1858 a large portion of the lands in this district were sold through the agent of the state. While these lands were not located in a block, and were therefore more or less scattered through various parts of the region, the greater number were located east of Eureka, around the bay toward Jacoby Creek, and in Eel River Valley.¹⁵

Expansion of Settlements, 1854-1860. During the later fifties settlements spread over all the open agricultural lands near the bay, and even began to crowd into the more remote valleys and prairies lying in and beyond the redwood belt, until discouraged by the rise of Indian hostilities. Settlements on the bay shore grew more numerous and compact, but otherwise did not change materially. Developments during this period in the outlying districts, however, deserve particular attention.

Eel River Valley had developed from a mere collection of settlers' claims to a thriving farming community. In

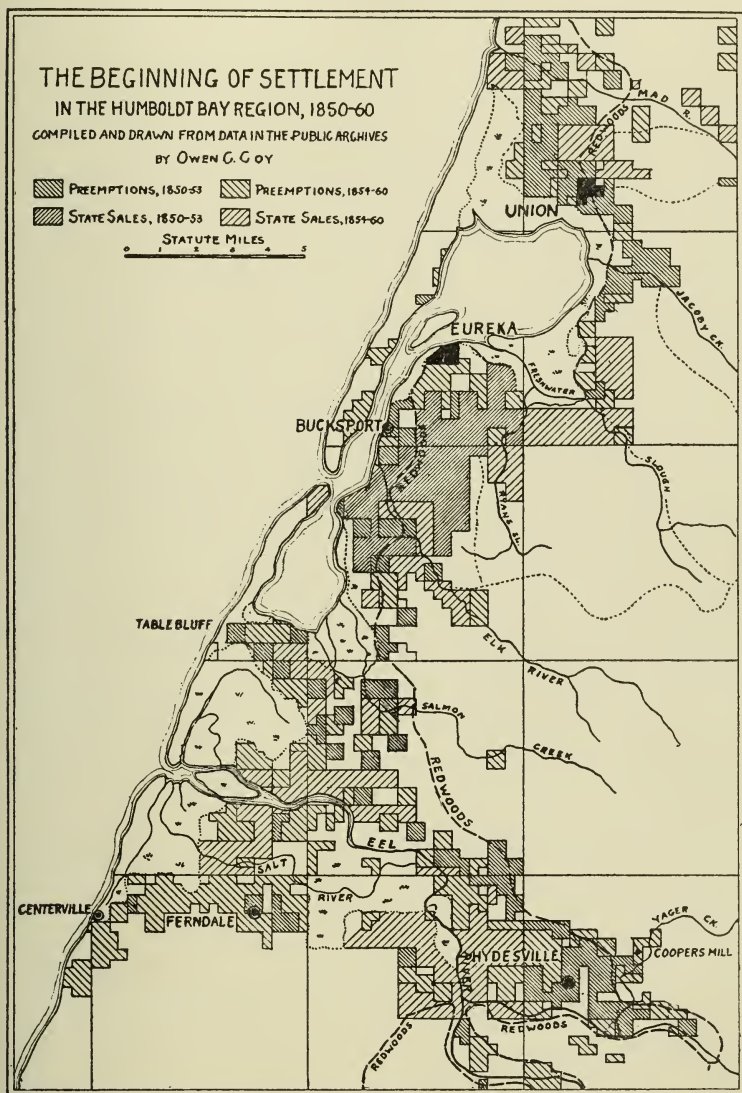
¹² *Ante*, 80.

¹³ While this does not appear to have been in conformity with the rules laid down by the general land office (*Ante*, 81, 82), there can be no question as to the practice in the Humboldt region. The Humboldt land office records show very few entries of patents previously issued by any other office. *Humboldt Times*, May 30, 1857, refers to the practice of settlers improving their claims only enough to hold them.

¹⁴ *Ante*, 85 *et seq.*

¹⁵ United States Land Office, Eureka, *Tract books*. Map, page 101.

1857 the sawmill operated by Cooper Brothers on Yager Creek was kept busy supplying lumber for the construction of the permanent improvements which at that time were



being built by the farmers of the valley.¹⁶ During the year 1858 the settlements of this locality rose to the dignity of a town, and from one of its pioneer settlers took the name of

¹⁶ *Humboldt Times*, May 5, 1857.

Hydesville.¹⁷ As described in 1859 it already had a good general store and hotel, a blacksmith shop, carriage shop, a saddlery establishment, a carpenter's and a shoe-maker's shop, a school of thirty-four pupils, and a Masonic hall. It was looked upon as the center of population of the valley, and as a good shipping point for agricultural products going to the Trinity mines. Farther down the river, at Rohners, there was also the beginning of a town, with a neat hotel and a general store, but in the amount of business done Hydesville held first place.¹⁸

On the south side of the river, near its mouth, another group of settlements was rapidly becoming important. This region was known by the name of Salt River, from a branch stream or slough of that name. As early as 1852 settlers had begun to file claims on the lands of this district; by 1859 the most desirable farming lands had all been taken up, thus forming a compact agricultural settlement. The only place in this region then looked upon as a town was Centerville. Its location was not prepossessing since it was situated on the lowlands near the ocean beach; it maintained its importance, however, from the fact that it was a general supply depot not only for the settlers of the Salt River district but for Bear River as well, being located upon the regularly traveled route leading from Humboldt Bay to the Bear River and Mattole River valleys.¹⁹ In the spring of 1860 S. L. Shaw started a hotel on his property, which may properly be considered as the beginning of the town of Ferndale. A post office was opened there the following August.²⁰

Along the coast south of Eel River are two important river valleys, which although more or less separated from the immediate Humboldt Bay district are a part of the larger region; these were the valleys of the Bear and Mattole rivers. As early as 1851 parties had explored the Bear River region,²¹ and by 1854 the Mattole Valley was becoming known.²² Farther south Shelter Cove seemed to offer greater attraction to settlers both because of its harbor and

¹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 13, 1858; W. T. Olmstead, *Statement of Reminiscences*, MS., 2-3.

¹⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 12, 1859.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* At that time the trail followed the ocean beach from Centerville to Bear River. Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865.

²⁰ *Humboldt Times*, May 5, Aug. 11, 1860.

²¹ *Alta California*, Aug. 26, 1851.

²² *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 23, 1854.

the reported abundance of good agricultural land lying near at hand.²³ During the summer of 1856 a party was organized for the purpose of forming a settlement at this place.²⁴ At that time settlers were locating in Bear and Mattole valleys, and by 1857 it was proposed to run an express from Eel River to Mattole.

During the period covered in this chapter these southern valleys became important grazing and agricultural districts. Difficulty of transportation prevented the full development of their agricultural resources, but for the stockmen they proved ideal locations.²⁵ Bear River especially was almost entirely given over to this business, a writer of the time describing the mountains as being covered with cattle, which, being largely Spanish, were noticeable for their long horns.²⁶

Mattole Valley, which by 1859 was occupied by settlers for some fifteen miles from the mouth of the river, was, on the other hand, more of an agricultural district, but notwithstanding the fertility of the soil and enthusiasm of its settlers the region had many handicaps. Agriculture suffered for want of markets, for the roads, where there were any, were poor, and an effort to carry on commerce by means of surf boats was not successful. Although redwood timber was abundant around Humboldt Bay, in this part of the country it was entirely absent, and buildings and fences had to be constructed of alder and spruce, which were brought with difficulty from the gulches and canyons.²⁷ In addition to these obstacles considerable excitement and indignation was aroused by the proposed extension of the Mendocino Indian Reservation northward along the coast, which according to the statement of the subagent was to include the land between the Noyo River, in Mendocino County, and Bear River, and to extend inland a distance of three miles.²⁸ This announcement was met by immediate protest from the whole region, and a meeting held in Eureka remonstrated strongly against the extension of the reservation any farther north than a point twelve miles south of the mouth of the Mattole

²³ *Ibid.*, June 9, 1855.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, June 28, July 19, 1856; San Francisco, *Herald*, Mar. 27, 1856.

²⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 26, 1857; Olmstead, *Statement*, MS., 2.

²⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 12, 1859.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 19, 1859.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Aug. 22, Sept. 5, 1857.

River.²⁹ Notwithstanding the opposition of the settlers the agent proceeded with his object and established a reservation, which included a part of the Mattole Valley.³⁰ This was a source of much annoyance to the whites, and when the agent was unsuccessful in preventing the Indians from committing depredations upon the property of the settlers there was no hesitancy in calling it an "infernal nuisance."³¹ With the removal of Colonel Henley as superintendent of Indian affairs the reservation lost its support and soon ceased to exist, much to the satisfaction of the white settlers.³²

In addition to the larger and more compact settlements others had sprung up in detached portions of the country; sometimes they were but a single ranch while in other cases several ranches shared amongst them some fertile prairie or valley land. Settlements of this kind at Angel's Ranch and on Kneeland Prairie during the earlier period have already been mentioned, and in a previous chapter the ranch of Isaac Minor on Redwood Creek has been instanced as an important factor in connection with the packing trade, both as a stopping place and as a supply station.³³ The many bald hills rising around the bay offered inducements to settlers, but the region lying beyond the timber belt was particularly attractive to those who were seeking good grazing lands. In the later fifties many settlers located on Redwood Creek and the upper Mad River, and these people were to be the greatest sufferers when in the years to follow the devastation incident to the Indian wars made itself so severely felt.³⁴

Nature and Distribution of Population, 1850-1860. During the first few years after the opening of the region by the Americans land speculation and mining excitement tended to make the immigration into the region more or less transient in nature, for during the time when speculation in town lands ran high many were attracted in the hope of obtaining wealth in this manner. Some of them stayed to become permanent residents, but others sold out or abandoned

²⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 10, 1857.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1858.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 20, Dec. 18, 25, 1858.

³² *Ibid.*, Dec. 3, 1859; *Report of the Secretary of the Interior communicating . . . the correspondence between the Indian office and the present superintendents and agents in California and J. Ross Browne, Esq.*, May 17, 1860 (Serial 1033, Doc. 46). For more complete account see *infra*, 152 et seq.

³³ Minor, *Reminiscences*, MS., 2-3.

³⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 22, Oct. 31, 1857, for Bald Hills settlements.

their claims, returning to San Francisco or moving elsewhere.³⁵ The proximity to the mines which served to bring many people into the region, also tended to increase this restless spirit among the population and drew away many who otherwise would have remained as permanent settlers. Many of these returned later and numbers of the early pioneers were at one time or another connected with the mining industry.³⁶ After the early booms connected with land speculation and mining operations were over consideration of the natural advantages of the region was more manifest and immigration was more steady and permanent.

Distribution of Population. For the first decade after the American occupation of the region the sources of information regarding the extent of the population are unsatisfactory. During the first three years a census was twice taken, but neither reports are of much value beyond meager statements regarding the population of some of the towns before they were fully established.³⁷ This was due both to the inherent difficulty of gathering information in such an unsettled region, and also to the fact that the results obtained were not compiled in a sufficiently detailed manner, being expressed in large areas or broad classifications.

After the year 1853, when the Humboldt Bay region was made a county, we are more fortunate in having data which, although not fully satisfactory, yet affords an indication of the increase and distribution of the population, such as that found in the school census and election returns. In 1853 Humboldt County was credited with but 54 children between the ages of four and eighteen years; the two following years, however, show 186; and from this there was a gradual increase up to 478 in the year 1859.³⁸ In basing conclusions on these statistics it must be borne in mind that during the earlier years the larger proportion of unmarried men and men without their families would mean a larger population than that indicated by the number of children.

³⁵ From a study of the names of the early explorers and those who made up the early companies, one is impressed with the large number of unfamiliar names—men whose interest in the region was short-lived. *Ante*, 63, regarding the effect on the early towns.

³⁶ This is noticeable from a study of the statements of Averell, Lindsey, Olmstead, and others.

³⁷ United States, *Seventh census*, 1850 (Serial 686), was admitted to be defective for the state, and certainly was for this particular part. To remedy this the state took a census in 1852, which for the purpose here desired is but little better, as the county is taken as the smallest geographical unit and the region around Humboldt Bay was then joined with the mining district of Trinity.

³⁸ Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Report*, 1864-1865:306-309.

For the relative distribution of the population more satisfactory results can be obtained, for both the school census and election returns give information for the different districts or townships. Here again care must be exercised since the boundaries of these divisions vary from time to time, and the same name does not, therefore, imply identical territory. In 1854 the number of votes cast at the congressional election show the three chief towns around the bay about equal in size, Union leading with 168 votes, followed by Eureka with 158, and Bucksport with 125. In the outlying districts the largest vote was polled at Eel River, where 51 votes were cast. Table Bluff cast 24, and Salt River 25, while 20 more are credited to South Fork (Trinity). Mad River is mentioned with the comment that the polls were not opened at that place.³⁹

The election for governor in 1857 shows some differences in the relative strength of the various parts. Eureka now took the lead with 177 votes, Union standing second with 126, while Bucksport dropped far below, having only 35 votes. On the other hand, Eel River increased to 89 and Table Bluff to 38. Bear River returned 20 votes, but no returns were received from Salt River or Mattole.⁴⁰

The election for 1859 showed a marked increase in the voting strength of Eureka as well as in the outlying districts. The former cast 222 votes, Union polled 155, and Bucksport only 44. Around Table Bluff and the lower Eel River Valley there were three precincts: Table Bluff, which was credited with 56 votes; Salt River, with 47; and the Island, with 54.⁴¹ Farther up the river Hydesville appears for the first time with 83 votes, and Yager with 22; while Eel River still continues as a division, having a vote of 67.⁴² To the south Bear River adds 21 votes and Mattole 63.⁴³

The school census for 1859 indicated a very similar result.⁴⁴ According to this there were in the county 802 children under eighteen years of age. Of these the largest number were in the Union district which reported 169 children,

³⁹ *Alta California*, Sept. 11, 1854.

⁴⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 5, 1857.

⁴¹ The island is a term applied to the district between Eel River and Salt River.

⁴² The term Eel River is more difficult. The township was that part of the county northeast of the river and south of Table Bluff and Bucksport townships; on the other hand, it was the name applied to the post office at Rohners during the early sixties. Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865.

⁴³ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 10, 1859.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Nov. 19, 1859.

Eureka being second with 158. Bucksport with two districts added 61 and 39 to the number; the Pacific district,⁴⁵ which that year had two schools, one at Salt River the other at Eel River, reported 98; Hydesville,⁴⁶ a newly organized district, reported 61; and Eel River, a district which included all that part of Eel River township not provided for in some other district,⁴⁷ showed a total of 139 children. From Mattole 77 more were added. The census of 1860 shows the population to have been distributed as follows: Eureka 617; Union 554; Eel River 416; Pacific 350; Bucksport 298, of whom 84 were soldiers; Mattole 282; and Table Bluff 177.⁴⁸

Sources of Population. In view of the cosmopolitan character of the population of California it may be of advantage to examine the available evidence in order to determine what contributions the various states and countries made to the population of this region. The required information may be had by a study of the returns of the eighth census of the United States, taken in 1860. In view of the fact that the statistical tables compiled and published by the superintendent of the census do not furnish the classifications we desire it is especially fortunate that the archives of the state contain copies of the original field notes from which all the statistical tables have been prepared. It is this material which forms the basis for the following conclusions.⁴⁹

These figures show that those born in California numbered 470, all of whom were under twenty-one years of age; that the largest number of immigrants came from New York, which furnished 201; followed by 123 from Ohio; 113 from Maine; 111 from Pennsylvania; 107 from Massachusetts; 103 from Missouri; with smaller numbers from the other states. Since, however, these states varied in density of population, the absolute numbers emigrating do not form a fair basis for judging their relative contributions. If, on

⁴⁵ Archives of Superintendent of Schools, *Trustees report, Pacific district*, 1859.

⁴⁶ *Humboldt Times*, May 7, 1859.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Apr. 9, 1859; Archives of County Superintendent of Schools, *Eel River District, Teachers Report*, 1858.

⁴⁸ United States, *Eighth census*, 1860, *Population* (Serial 1202), 29.

⁴⁹ Archives of Secretary of State at Sacramento, *Original returns of the 8th census of the U. S., 1860*. These are the large sheets prepared by the field workers. Schedule I, relating to population, was used in making these deductions. The data is arranged by counties and townships and gives the information regarding households, families, and individuals.

the other hand, these numbers are expressed in proportion to the total population of the respective states, the relative strength of the emigration movement is more apparent. In reducing these figures to a common basis they have been expressed in terms of the ratio to each hundred thousand inhabitants. The results are found to be as follows: Oregon leads with 89; followed by Maine with 18; Vermont, 13.9; Missouri, 9.6; Massachusetts, 8.7; New Hampshire, 7.3; Kentucky, 7.2; and the other states in lesser proportion.

Among the various geographical groups into which the states may be divided the statistics shows that New England furnished a total of 315 immigrants, or 10.4 persons to every hundred thousand of her population. Next in order stand the western border slave states—Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas—which furnished 233, or 7.4.⁵⁰ The north central states furnished 375, or a ratio of 4.8 to one hundred thousand; the middle Atlantic states—New York, Pennsylvania and New Jersey—333, or a ratio of 4.4 on the adopted plan. The smallest contribution, both in totals and percentage, was made by the south Atlantic and Gulf states, which furnished but 107 immigrants, less than 2.2 to each hundred thousand of their nonslave population. As between the free and the slave states it is seen that the former furnished far more than their proportion, the number from the free states amounting to 1965, while from slave states there were but 341. Furthermore, more than one-half this latter number were from the border states which remained loyal at the time of the secession, the number from states which later seceded being only 169.⁵¹

From these figures certain conclusions may be drawn regarding the movements of population. The greater proportion of the native-born immigration came from the states of the north Atlantic coast and the upper Mississippi Valley. New England, led by the state of Maine, furnished much more than its quota. The states of the Ohio and the upper Mississippi valleys also contributed largely to this western migration, which in its earlier stages had led to the develop-

⁵⁰ These figures are based upon the ratio to the free population alone, hence it is larger in proportion to the total population than it would be were the slaves also included.

⁵¹ This agrees with the observation made by Van Dyke, in his *Statement*, MS., 8-9. He speaks of the absence of the southern element along the coast, although there were many in the mines. He also speaks of the people from the British provinces.

ment of their region. In fact, the continuity of this westward movement is clearly indicated by the census returns, which show that in a very large number of cases those born in these western states were minor children whose parents had recently migrated from eastern states.⁵² As noted in the preceding paragraph the immigration from the southern slave states into this portion of California was slight, a fact which is explained by the northern location of the latter.

The foreign-born population of Humboldt County in 1860 amounted to 497.⁵³ Of these 313, or nearly 63 per cent, were born in Great Britain or some of her colonies, the distribution being as follows: England, 59; Ireland, 97; Scotland and Wales, 26; British America, 118; and other British colonies, 13. Next stand the German states with 85; while France furnished 22, as did also Scandinavia, 12 of the latter being from Denmark and 5 each from Norway and Sweden. There were 11 from Switzerland and one each from Austria, Russia, and Portugal. The remaining number was composed of 34 Chinese, 4 natives of Mexico, and 2 children from the Sandwich Islands.

In regard to the distribution of these various elements of population within the county itself, although no marked characteristics are prominent, a few points may be noted. Eureka township, being the center of the lumber industry for the region, naturally attracted those families who had been associated with that business, viz., the people from Maine, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia. Union township, on the other hand, due to greater commercial activity, caused by the trade with the mines, contained the greater part of the German and French population, although there was also a large proportion of people from the Ohio and the Mississippi valley regions, who doubtless engaged in agricultural pursuits on the rich river bottom around Union. The immigration from the southern states, while distributed

⁵² Since the census schedules give the name, age, and birthplace of each member in the family, the locality of the family at various dates can, in a general way, be determined. To any one going over these returns this is readily apparent. With the exception of the older states, Ohio, Kentucky, and Tennessee, the greater proportion of the emigrants from the Mississippi valley were minor children.

⁵³ The figures here do not agree with the published census report, United States, *Eighth census*, 1860, *Population*, 33, where the total foreign population is given as 579. This difference is due in part to the fact that the soldiers at Fort Humboldt were not included in my figures as they could not be considered settlers. For the purpose of this comparison, however, this difference is unimportant.

more or less through all of the townships, was especially noticeable in Pacific, Eel River, and Union townships.⁵⁴

In the preceding paragraph it was stated that the lumber business around Eureka attracted a great proportion of those already familiar with this industry. A further analysis demonstrates this point more fully. There were in the county 168 men whose occupations were more or less directly connected with the lumber business, 114 of whom were native-born, and 54 foreign-born. It is significant, therefore, that notwithstanding the fact that nineteen states were represented, 31, or more than 27 per cent of the native-born lumber-men came from the one State of Maine, the great lumber-producing state.⁵⁵ Furthermore, when a study is made of the foreign-born element, it is found that 43, or nearly 80 per cent of the whole number engaged in lumber production, were born in the British provinces, practically all in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia.⁵⁶ To those familiar with the region the name of John Vance and later that of Wm. Carson need only be mentioned to show the importance of this element in the lumber business, for these two men, who perhaps more than any others represented the lumber business in the region during their generation, were both natives of these British provinces.

In a word, then, it is evident that the population of Humboldt County in 1860 was composed very largely of native-born Americans, the foreign-born making up only about one-fifth of the total number; that the influence of the northern states, especially New England, far outweighed that of the South; that among the foreign-born element the people from English-speaking countries greatly predominated. Much of this was a natural part of the great western movement of population, which ever sought new lands and undeveloped resources. In this region the influence of the lumber industry is seen to have had a noticeable effect on this movement.

⁵⁴ Other evidence would seem to indicate that the southern frontiersmen preferred the parts of the county more remote from the towns, and were engaged principally in stock-raising and agriculture.

⁵⁵ This was nearly 5 men to each 100,000 of Maine's population. Among the other states the ratio runs as follows: New Hampshire 1.4; Vermont .9; Massachusetts .8; Connecticut .7 and others in smaller percentages.

⁵⁶ This element, commonly referred to as the "Blue-noses," is still a noticeable part of the population of the county, their annual picnic being an important festivity. The other countries were represented as follows: Ireland 5; England 2; Scotland 2; France 1; German states 1.

Beginnings of Agriculture, 1850-1860. Although the first migrations into the region were intimately associated with the idea of trade with the gold district, the hope of securing good agricultural lands was also an important motive. This had been mentioned as one of its resources at the meeting held in 1848 to consider the exploration of the region,⁵⁷ and was present in the minds of the members of the Gregg party, which was successful in discovering the bay in 1849.⁵⁸

While the first settlements had been made on sites favorable for towns, other locations had been made almost simultaneously upon the surrounding lands with a view to bringing them under cultivation. During the year 1850, as noted earlier in this chapter, settlements of this kind were made on lands surrounding Union and in the Eel River Valley.

These earlier years were largely a period of experimentation. Various kinds of crops were tried and the local papers contain numerous items describing extra large beets, turnips, or potatoes. No statistics are available for the years preceding 1854, so no definite idea can be formed of the various products during this period beyond what is gained from a chance mention here and there. Grain, of course, was one of the early products, and potatoes, which were later to hold such an important position among the exports of the region, were early considered of value. As early as 1851 potatoes were raised in the Eel River Valley.⁵⁹ Stock raising also had begun to some extent, Angel's Ranch having been located in 1851, and Kleiser's Ranch on Kneeland Prairie soon afterward.⁶⁰

In the year 1854 the report of the county assessor was published for the first time, and may be taken as a satisfactory indication of the extent of agricultural activity at that date.⁶¹ This report states that there were then 2500 acres under cultivation, located chiefly in the valleys of Eel and Mad rivers. There were reported 320 horses, 360 mules, 412 milch cows, and 1400 cattle, which would seem to indicate an important beginning in the stock business even

⁵⁷ *Ante*, 36, 37.

⁵⁸ *Ante*, 41, 42.

⁵⁹ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, 111, 126, 128.

⁶⁰ *Ante*, 97, n. 6.

⁶¹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1854:65-66. The reports of the County Assessor are regularly incorporated in the published reports of the state surveyor general. *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 18, 1854.

at that date. In commenting on this item the editor of the *Humboldt Times* expressed the belief that these numbers should be higher owing to the great number of recent arrivals. The report gives the grain production as follows: barley 6000 bushels, wheat 14,000, and oats 16,000. Twenty thousand bushels of potatoes were also reported. The production of fruits was at this time inconsiderable owing to the fact that the trees were not yet in bearing.

General Agriculture, 1855-1859. During the later years of this decade agriculture and horticulture became of much importance, especially on the fertile lands lying in the vicinity of Humboldt Bay. In July, 1855, an enterprising merchant of Union announced in his advertisement a supply of Humboldt products, among which were three thousand pounds of "Premium Eel River Butter," Humboldt cheese, beans, and flour.⁶² In the following years the opening of new trails from Eel River Valley to the mines and the development of an export trade by sea furnished additional markets for this produce and gave greater encouragement to the agricultural industry. In consequence the number of acres cultivated increased steadily from 2500 in 1854 to 3846 in 1857 and 4150 in 1858.⁶³

The greater portion of these cultivated lands was devoted to grain raising, the main products being wheat, oats, and barley, although both corn and buckwheat are mentioned in less important amounts. Wheat and oats competed for first place, the yield of wheat advancing from 14,000 bushels in 1854 to 35,000 in 1856 and 40,563 in 1860. Oats furnished 16,000 bushels in 1854 and reached its highest point with 56,250 bushels in 1857, temporarily dropping to 15,723 in 1860. Barley also reached its highest point in 1857 with 19,840 bushels. In 1860 this also had decreased for the time being to 1991 bushels.⁶⁴ In the warmer valleys 2259 bushels of corn were raised in 1858, and the same year the report shows 500 bushels of buckwheat, although this does not appear again for several years. Flax had also

⁶² Advertisement of H. J. Dart, *Humboldt Times*, July, 1855.

⁶³ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1854:76; 1857, and 1858. The report of 1856 gives 10,000 acres as being under cultivation, but this is more probably the number enclosed. *Ibid.*, 1856:34.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, *passim*. There was no report from Humboldt in 1859.

been raised on Table Bluff in the year 1855, and from the results obtained seemed to promise well.⁶⁵

During the year 1856 the first McCormick reaper was introduced into the region by Snyder & Parker of Hoopa Valley, a district which had become an important agricultural center.⁶⁶ In the season of 1858 two of these machines were also brought into the Eel River Valley.⁶⁷ During this period flour and grist mills began to be operated in this part of the country. As early as 1854 three were in operation, one by the Coopers on Yager Creek, one by Duff in Eureka, and another on Mad River. A mill at Hoopa was opened about the same time.⁶⁸ These mills all used only Humboldt grains, and were claimed to produce a very good grade of flour.

Among the other lines of produce potatoes took the lead, although greater acreage was given to peas. The statistics show that during these years between 200 and 250 acres which had been planted in potatoes yielded 25,000 bushels in 1856 and 56,632 bushels in 1860. As early as 1856 the exportation of potatoes had begun, and in the San Francisco market Humboldt potatoes were already considered of a quality equal to any.⁶⁹ According to the report of 1856, 275 acres were sown to peas and yielded 8250 bushels; by 1860 this had reached an acreage of 833 and a yield of 31,584 bushels. Beans were also an important item, 60 acres supplying 900 bushels in 1858. They did not, however, compete strongly with the other products mentioned. Many other miscellaneous products were raised, but not in sufficient degree to hold an important place in the reports of the time.⁷⁰

A considerable number of fruit trees had been set out, but had not yet begun to bear. They are enumerated for the first time in the report of the assessor for the year 1857. From this it is seen that apple trees were the most popular, while the peach ranked next in importance. There were

⁶⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 18, 1855.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, June 14, 1856.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1858.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 9, Oct. 21, Nov. 11, Dec. 9, 23, 1854; Jan. 19, 1856.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 15, Nov. 22, 1856; Nov. 28, 1857. In March, 1856, 100 tons had been shipped, with 75 more awaiting shipment; in November of the same year 200 tons were exported. For other data referred to, California Surveyor general, *Report*.

⁷⁰ In 1858 the report shows: onions 12 acres; rye 10 acres; and flax 3 acres.

at that time 7400 apple, 3920 peach, 700 pear, 437 plum, 227 cherry, and 200 apricot trees in the county. Of the smaller fruits there were 4025 gooseberry bushes and 500 grape vines. During the next year the apple trees had increased to 9000, while the other fruits maintained about the same proportion. Among other varieties there were 400 quince trees, and 25 each of figs, almonds, and walnuts. There were now also 150 raspberry and 27,007 strawberry vines.

Stock-raising and Dairying, 1855-1859. The beginning of the stock industry in the region has already been mentioned and its later development has been described, in so far as it affected settlements, for its chief centers lay along the coast in the Bear and Mattole River districts, and in the interior on the Bald Hills in the region beyond the redwood belt.⁷¹ This latter district had a decided advantage during the earlier years on account of its proximity to the mines, which furnished a ready market.

Although the stock-raising and dairy business are not identical the statistics given make it difficult to distinguish between the two, but we may judge that both were important factors. The surveyor general's report for 1856 shows Humboldt County had produced 80,000 pounds of butter during the previous year, which placed it second in rank among butter producing counties; 2000 pounds of cheese were also made in the county, and in this industry it held sixth place.⁷² It must not be inferred from these figures that Humboldt constantly maintained this high rank in the dairy business, for during the following years many other counties increased their output of butter more rapidly than did Humboldt, which, in fact, after reaching 100,000 pounds in 1858 declined to 34,400 pounds in 1860, placing its rank at twelfth place.⁷³ The production of cheese increased each year, amounting to 6800 pounds in 1860; but this gave the county only thirteenth place in that industry.

The stock business developed rapidly during the later fifties, not only through natural increase but also on account of the large numbers of cattle driven into the region. In 1856 W. T. Olmstead located in the Bear River region with

⁷¹ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 3, 1855.

⁷² California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1856.

⁷³ For 1858, *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 16, 1858; for 1860, California Surveyor general, *Report*.

300 head of cattle, which he had brought with him from Tehama County. Near him were located several other men also interested in the stock business.⁷⁴ At this time also another herd of 200 head was driven from the Sacramento Valley into the Redwood Creek region by J. P. Albee.⁷⁵ During the year 1857, many cattle were driven south from Oregon, although probably the larger number came over the trails from the Sacramento Valley or up the coast from Sonoma.⁷⁶ It was estimated in November of that year that two thousand head of cattle had entered the county since the assessor had made his supplemental report.⁷⁷

During the spring of 1858 the ranchers encountered much difficulty on account of a poisonous weed which killed many of their cattle. It does not appear to have seriously affected the cattle business, for during the year the importation of cattle steadily increased. The greatest number at this time seem to have come from the Willamette Valley, and were driven into the grazing districts in the Bald Hills as well as into the Bear and Mattole River valleys.⁷⁸ The effect upon the settlement of the region has already been noted, for with the increase in the number of cattle there followed an increase in the population of these various districts. The numbers reported by the assessor show a great increase during this period. While the report for 1854 gave only 1812 head of cattle in the county, these had increased to 3604 in 1856; 6597 in 1857; 9500 in 1858; and 19,205 in 1860.⁷⁹ At this latter date they were classed as follows: cows 4815; calves 4511; stock cattle 8620; beef cattle 460; oxen 769. In fact, the number of cattle had increased so rapidly that a contemporaneous writer, speaking of the conditions in the Mattole region, expressed concern that the ranges might soon be overstocked unless a market were found for some of the cattle.⁸⁰

Other kinds of stock had also increased in number although not in the same proportion as the cattle. In 1860 there were reported 8194 hogs, not counting 980 that had been

⁷⁴ Olmstead, *Statement*, MS., 2.

⁷⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 23, 1856.

⁷⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 11, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, Nov. 14, 1857, all contain items regarding Oregon cattle.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1857.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, July 10, 1858; Oct. 22, 1859.

⁷⁹ California Surveyor general, *Reports*, for dates given.

⁸⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 19, 1859.

slaughtered during the year. Sheep also had become a factor, there being 1500 head in the county in 1858. This number was reduced to 523 in the report for 1860, near which figure it remained for several years. The number of horses and mules, some of which were raised in the region, had also materially increased during this period.⁸¹ In 1854 the reports gave the number of horses as 320; by 1858 this had increased to 825, about evenly divided between American and Spanish horses; in 1860 there were 1638 head, of which 1275 were Spanish. The number of mules varied, increasing from 320 in 1854, to 450 in 1856, and 614 in 1857. After this the number declined, the report of 1860 showing but 528.

⁸¹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 12, 1857, speaks of the importation of some blooded stock.

CHAPTER VIII
SAWMILLS AND SCHOONERS,
1850-1859

Two lines of economic activity which were of much importance in the development of the region during the first decade of settlement as well as in the later years still remain to be considered. These are the lumber industry and shipping. Each is so closely connected with the other that both must be considered in order fully to understand either. At the close of the chapter two other industries somewhat allied with these, namely, shipbuilding and fisheries, will be briefly considered.

The Lumber Industry, 1850-1859. During the earlier years the great redwood forests which covered such a large extent of the region around Humboldt Bay were, with the exception of the more accessible parts lying near the water's edge, looked upon as a hindrance to settlement. Even at that time, however, their value for lumber purposes was recognized, and as the problem of transportation became less difficult the economic value of these lands increased.

The district known as the redwood belt, because so densely covered with redwood forests, extended through the entire length of the region. To the south of the Klamath River it lay immediately along the coast, extending inland for a distance of ten or twelve miles. At Humboldt Bay it came close to the water's edge, excepting on the bottom lands of Mad River and Elk River and on Table Bluff. South of the bay the redwoods receded from the coast, following along the upper courses of Eel River.¹

The beginning of interest in the lumber business has been briefly noted in connection with the early history of some of the towns. Trinidad and Eureka, which were so closely surrounded by dense redwood forests, soon began to take advantage of these as one of their natural resources. Soon after the discovery of the region the cutting of timber was begun, in fact, some had been taken by the *Cameo* on the

¹ Lentell, *Map of Humboldt County*, indicates the general extent of the redwood belt. For the lack of timber in Mattole see *ante*, 103.

return from her voyage of exploration. The vessel arrived in San Francisco from Trinidad Bay on April 28, 1850, with a load of 100 spiles.² During the summer the shipping of spiles and square timbers was continued,³ and in January of the next year the receipt of lumber from the region was first noted in the San Francisco papers.⁴

The first mill to be built in the region was the Pioneer Mill, built by Eddy & White during the summer of 1850. This mill was not altogether successful, and to Ryan, Duff & Company is given the credit of having built the first successful mill on Humboldt Bay, in February, 1852.⁵ The boiler and engine of the steamer *Santa Clara*, which was run up on the beach for that purpose, was utilized in the construction of this mill. A shaft connected the engine with the mill, while the cabin of the vessel served as eating and sleeping quarters for the men.⁶ It is described as having four gangs of saws, with a capacity of 60,000 feet of lumber and 40,000 laths daily, and employed from thirty-five to forty men.⁷ In the meantime a mill had been erected by Luffelholz at Little River in 1851,⁸ and another at Trinidad in 1852.⁹ From this time until 1854 mills increased rapidly in number: one each at Union and Bucksport, and another by the Cooper Brothers in Eel River Valley.¹⁰

By 1854 there were no less than nine mills operating on Humboldt Bay, seven of which were located in Eureka. These mills employed 200 loggers and about 130 other men, and represented a capital estimated at \$400,000.¹¹ Their daily output was given as 220,000 feet of lumber and 88,000 laths. The largest of these were the mills of Ryan, Duff &

² *Alta California*, shipping news, Apr. 28, 1850.

³ *Ibid.*, Aug. 8, 10, 15, 21, Sept. 25, Oct. 21, 1850.

⁴ The schooner *Odd Fellow* arrived in San Francisco from Trinidad Bay on January 10, 1851, with a load of lumber. On February 19 the brig *Cecilia Jones* brought a load of lumber from Humboldt Bay. *San Francisco Herald*.

⁵ *Alta California*, Aug. 20, 1850; Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 141; Bancroft, *California*, VI, 503.

⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 18, 1862, June 13, 1863; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 141. A writer in the *Oriole* says: "His mill was built on a novel plan; cutting a slough from the bay inland near the place where Mr. Person's furnace [the old Eureka foundry] now stands, the steamer was run in, and the mill built along side, the main shaft being used for the propelling power of the mill, and the steamer was converted into a dwelling where the cooking and lodging for the men was provided for." *Humboldt Times*, Dec 7, 1872.

⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 16, 1854; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 141.

⁸ Archives of Humboldt County Recorder, *Preemption Claims, Klamath Co.*, 1851-1853:8.

⁹ Deming, *Statement*, MS., 1.

¹⁰ Averell, *Statement*, MS., 3-4; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 191.

¹¹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 9, 16, 1854. The other mills were: Pine & Bean's 8 men; Mula Mill 3; Pioneer Mill 10; Bay Mill 10 (this mill had also a sash and door factory); Union Mill 5; and the Modena Mill, at Bucksport, 10 men.

Company, which employed thirty-five men, Ridgeway & Flanders employing thirty-one men, May & Brother, eighteen. The other smaller mills each furnished labor to from three to ten men.

In September, 1854, nine of the largest mill owners on the bay united to form what was styled the Humboldt Lumber Manufacturing Company. This company was capitalized at \$380,000, and the purpose, as set forth in the articles of incorporation, was the "manufacturing, shipping and selling of lumber either in Foreign or Domestic ports and to trade in merchandise generally."¹² J. T. Ryan was elected president of the company and Martin White vice-president.

The success of the new company did not fulfill the anticipations of its promoters. The large production of lumber on the coast during the previous years had tended to overstock the market,¹³ which, together with the general financial depression throughout the coast during the year 1854¹⁴ and the failure of business in San Francisco early in 1855,¹⁵ caused many of the mills to suspend operations. In February the Modena Mill at Bucksport was sold by the sheriff at a great sacrifice to cover a mechanic's lien.¹⁶

This condition was connected in the popular mind with the formation of the lumbermen's combination and many accusations were made against them. The members of the company appear to have acted in good faith, however, and to have been the victims of circumstances rather than themselves the guilty parties.¹⁷ In April the mills of the company were turned over to the employees and logging men, who were the chief creditors, and soon they were again in operation.¹⁸ This new management sold the lumber for cash at the wharves in Humboldt Bay, and although the price obtained was lower than that secured under the old method by this plan they avoided the difficulties arising from a

¹² Archives of County Recorder, *Miscellany*, Book A, 16; *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 23, Oct. 28, 1854.

¹³ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 17, 1855.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Sept. 9, 1854.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 24, Mar. 10, 17, Apr. 7, 28, 1855.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1855.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Mar. 3, 1855. In August, the vice president of the company, Mr. White, held a meeting of the residents of Eureka and according to the *Times* cleared the company of all the charges. *Ibid.*, Aug. 4, 1855.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, 28, 1855.

credit system,¹⁹ and consequently were able to keep the mills running steadily at a profit.²⁰

Following this depression it was some years before the lumber business around Humboldt Bay was again in the flourishing condition of the year 1854. In the fall of 1856, a mill was built by Yocum & Woodward on Salmon Creek.²¹ Business is described at that time as being on a better basis than ever before, and while there was much lumber on hand shipping was brisk and prospects good.²² In January, 1857, one of the San Francisco papers speaks enthusiastically of the lumber business around Eureka which it regards as the most extensive lumber district in California.²³ In spite of the favorable statements which indicate an improvement in the conditions, the facts seem to show that for this decade the lumber business had reached its climax during the years 1853 and 1854. In 1860 the reports show that Humboldt County had nine mills, which had produced 9,575,000 feet of sawed lumber the preceding year. At this time there were thirteen other counties in the state having a greater number of mills than Humboldt, but, on the other hand, only three of them reported a greater output of lumber.²⁴

Beginning of Shipping, 1850-1852. Another line of activity closely associated with the lumber industry was that of commerce. This intimate relationship became evident as soon as the development of the region began to assume a more permanent character; while during the earlier years, when the natural resources of the region were but little known and the dominant interest was in mining and land speculation, shipping partook of the spirit of the time and was more or less sporadic in its nature. The importance of the ocean during the period of exploration has been discussed in the previous chapters.²⁵ The supposed proximity to the Trinity mines caused men to think that great wealth awaited those who could take the lead in opening up this

¹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, June 9, 1855; Mar. 8, 1856.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, June 9, 1855.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 23, 1856.

²² *Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1856.

²³ San Francisco, *Bulletin*, Jan. 26, 1857.

²⁴ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1860. These were Nevada with 25,627,000 feet; Santa Cruz with 12,000,000; and Amador with 10,000,000 feet. El Dorado with thirty mills and Sonoma with twelve gave no report regarding output.

²⁵ Especially chapter III.

new trade, so that from the very first there was a rush of shipping to the newly discovered region. Fourteen vessels are listed as having sailed from San Francisco for Trinidad in 1850, before the news of the rediscovery of the bay had been received. About the same number sailed during the next two months, all having Trinidad as their objective point. Humboldt Bay first appears in the shipping news in July, 1850, when the schooner *Frances Helen* left San Francisco for that place. During the ensuing months, however, this new port was the destination of the larger proportion of the vessels clearing for the northern coast.²⁶

In the winter of 1850-1851 the Gold Bluffs excitement once again focused the attention on that region and gave Trinidad a great impetus toward prosperity.²⁷ During the months from December to March thirty-nine vessels sailed for these northern ports, twenty-eight of which were bound for Trinidad or the Gold Bluffs direct. It is at this time that steamers are first listed in connection with Humboldt ports. By March or April the excitement had passed away and shipping dropped back to more normal conditions, the two ports sharing about equally in caring for the trade of the region. During the latter part of 1851 and in 1852 shipping was very light, only six vessels being listed as arriving in San Francisco from this region during the first half of 1852. In the course of the year, however, the rapid growth of the lumber industry and the purchase of a steam tug to aid sailing vessels in the navigation of Humboldt Bar meant the beginning of a new era for shipping on Humboldt Bay.

The Lumber Trade, 1852-1854. As just noted, the latter part of the year 1852 ushered in a new period in the history of commerce on Humboldt Bay, for by this time the lumber industry had become a most important factor, and the sea furnished the only practical means whereby its product could be exported. In November, 1852, Ryan, Duff & Company, who had earlier in the year erected a mill at Eureka, purchased the tug *Mary Ann* to act both as tow-boat and pilot for vessels using the waters of the bay.²⁸

²⁶ A very large part of the material in these pages is based upon the shipping news in the San Francisco papers. After December, 1850, I have used the files of the *San Francisco Herald*, for the earlier months I have used the *Alta California*, April to July; and the *Picayune* from August to December.

²⁷ *Ante*, 50-51.

²⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 25, 1858; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 176.

This was of much importance to the business, as practically all of the lumber was transported by sailing vessels and many had been wrecked in attempting passage across the bar.²⁹

During the two years following the arrival of the tug, commerce on the bay was more active than at any time during the decade under consideration in this chapter. While but thirty sailing vessels arrived in San Francisco from Humboldt Bay in 1852, one hundred and forty-three, or nearly five times that number, arrived during 1853. Over two-thirds of these were listed during the last half of the year, September alone showing twenty-seven. These vessels all carried lumber, the cargoes ranging from 45,000 to 200,000 feet each, the average load being about 110,000 feet. Some shipments were made from Trinidad, but these were unimportant as compared with those from Humboldt Bay.³⁰

During the year 1854 activity in commerce maintained a steady pace and promised to outstrip the record of the previous year, and would have done so had not a financial stringency and overproduction of lumber suddenly caused the market for that article to fail. One hundred and thirty-eight lumber vessels arrived in San Francisco from Humboldt Bay during the year. For the eleven months preceding June 1, 1854, the exportation of lumber from this port amounted to 18,932,000 feet.³¹ In addition to this domestic trade the exportation of lumber to foreign ports began during the year, probably through the newly formed lumber association. In October, several cargoes of lumber were shipped to Australia by Duff & Chamberlain. Duff himself went with the first of these, in order to place orders before the arrival of the later shipments.³²

Development of the Lumber Trade, 1855-1859. Shipping during 1855 shows most markedly the result of the slump in the lumber market and the consequent inactivity of the

²⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 7, 14, 1854, says ten vessels had been wrecked up to this time. These were the "Eclipse," brig "San Jacinto," schooner "Susan Wardwell," and bark "Jane" in 1850; the steamer "Com. Preble" in 1851; steamer "Sea Gull," bark "Cornwallis," bark "Home," brig "John Clifford," and the schooner "Mexican" in 1852. See also Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, and Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 130.

³⁰ For general statements see shipping news in *San Francisco Herald*. Six sailing vessels are listed from Trinidad. Two of these carried lumber, one of them, the "Gen. Morgan," carrying 90,000 feet, the other vessels having shingles, laths, wood, etc.

³¹ Coast Survey, *Report*, 1854 (Serial 757), appendix 28.

³² *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 21, 1854.

mills around Humboldt Bay. Although production continued, it was less than half what it had been during the previous year, sixty-six vessels being the number to arrive at San Francisco from the Humboldt ports. During the following years, with the revival of the lumber business, the number of vessels steadily increased, there being sixty-nine in 1856, eighty-four in 1857, and forty-nine during the first half of 1858. At this time all shipping was temporarily disarranged on account of the excitement over the discovery of gold on the Fraser River, British Columbia.³³ As a result of this condition but six sailing vessels reached San Francisco from Humboldt Bay during the months of July, August, and September, and of these the *Ryerson*, the only vessel to sail in July, carried a large passenger list, and was advertised to sail for the new mines.³⁴ Toward the end of the year shipping began to recover, and by 1859 was again more extensive than before the Fraser River excitement.³⁵

While attention has been directed almost entirely to domestic shipping, trade with more distant ports was also a factor to be considered. In the fall of 1854 several shipments of redwood lumber were sent to the South Pacific. This was followed up during the later years, until the amount of business done furnished strong argument for establishing a port of entry on Humboldt Bay. Australia was the chief consumer, but shipments were also sent to China, the Sandwich Islands, and South America.

During the year 1855 the brig *Jane* made a trip to Hawaii, and found that while business conditions in the islands reflected those upon the coast the price of lumber was better.³⁶ Later in the year the British bark *Armitage* loaded at Humboldt Bay for Hongkong.³⁷ The most distant shipment during this period was made in the fall of 1856 when the French vessel *Haumet* took a cargo of lumber to the island of Mauritius in the Indian Ocean.³⁸ The reports for the next two years show extensive shipping to distant ports. For Australia there are listed the *Hermione*

³³ *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1858. For the effect of this upon shipping see the advertisement columns of the San Francisco papers during the summer of 1858. In the *Alta California* for July 15 twenty-four sailing vessels and two steamers are advertised to sail for the mines.

³⁴ San Francisco, *Herald*, shipping news, June 26, July 15, 1858.

³⁵ There were eighty-six vessels from Humboldt Bay.

³⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 1, 1855.

³⁷ San Francisco, *Herald*, Nov. 16, 1855.

³⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 2, 1856.

and *Swiss Boy* in December, 1856; the *Lucas* in January, 1857;³⁹ the *Dudley*, *William*, *St. Genevieve*, *Henricus*, and *Caroline* in 1858; the *John Knox* in 1859.⁴⁰ For Chinese ports there were the *Ceres* and *Early Bird* in 1857, and the *Almatia* and *Quatre Bras* in 1858.⁴¹ Besides these, shipments were sent to the Sandwich Islands,⁴² and one, the bark *Callao*, to Valparaiso, Chile.⁴³

These vessels as a rule were much larger than those employed in the coastwise trade, yet they found no difficulty in making the entrance into Humboldt Bay, and the profits received fully justified the trade.⁴⁴ Among the largest of the vessels were the ship *William*, which carried 322,000 feet of lumber; the bark *Henricus*, with 350,000 feet; and the ship *John Knox*, which sailed for Melbourne, Australia, in 1859 with 409,000 feet of lumber and 30,000 pickets. When loaded this vessel drew eighteen feet of water.⁴⁵

Trinidad as a Port, 1852-1859. In the previous pages little effort has been made to distinguish clearly between Humboldt and Trinidad bays, the two ports of the region, so it may be well at this point to call attention briefly to their relative importance. During the early period of exploration, followed by the Gold Bluffs excitement, Trinidad enjoyed the greater popularity, but after that time the importance shifted to Humboldt Bay. Even then Trinidad's position yielded her some advantages, especially in connection with the steamer service, for her open harbor did not present the risk and delay due to the crossing of the Humboldt Bar, and express and passengers could be quickly transported by means of lighters or small boats.

In 1852 nine sailing vessels arrived in San Francisco from Trinidad. All of these were schooners, the *Pomona* being the most frequent visitor, since it made regular trips about once a month. During the years following, the number gradually dwindled until 1855, when not a single sailing vessel is listed from Trinidad.⁴⁶ In 1859, however, Trinidad

³⁹ San Francisco, *Herald*, Dec. 13, 28, 1856; Jan. 17, 1857.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 18, 1858; *Humboldt Times*, May 1, Nov. 6, 1858; Nov. 19, 1859.

⁴¹ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 28, 1856; May 1, 1858; San Francisco, *Herald*, May 4, 1857.

⁴² The *Golden State*, San Francisco, *Herald*, Feb. 7, 1858.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, June 28, 1857.

⁴⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 10, 1858.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 30, 1858; Nov. 9, 1859.

⁴⁶ There were six in 1853, five in 1854, none in 1855, one oil schooner in 1856, two in 1857 and one in 1858. Shipping news in the San Francisco *Herald*.

again showed signs of life, for during the summer a wharf was constructed on the side of the rock at Trinidad Head at a cost of \$8,000. By means of a tunnel and a tramway 200 yards in length this wharf was connected with the town. This made it possible to dispense with the use of lighters in handling freight and did much toward reviving the business life of the place.⁴⁷ From this time on the arrival of sailing vessels from Trinidad is to be seen more frequently in the San Francisco papers, one vessel, the schooner *Palestine*, making regular trips between the two ports.

Steamer Service, 1850-1859. Consideration so far has been given almost exclusively to the trade carried on by sailing vessels. These transported by far the greater bulk of the shipments from Humboldt and carried practically all of the lumber. They were, however, not entirely satisfactory for general freight and passenger traffic, so the service of steamers was considered very desirable by the people of the region. Although many attempts were made to establish a regular steamer line, including Humboldt Bay as a port of call, for some reason none proved entirely successful during the ten years covered in this chapter. The company which came the nearest to accomplishing this object was the United States Mail Line, which operated the *Columbia* between San Francisco and the Columbia River. The main line of trade for this company, however, did not include the Humboldt Bay region, so stops were made at those ports only when it suited the convenience and profit of the company; and it was not until the last two or three years of the decade that any attempt was made to give regular service to the people of this district.

The first notice of a steamer service to Humboldt Bay was in September, 1850, when the *Sea Gull* was advertised to sail for Portland, stopping at Humboldt Bay, cabin passage to the latter point being fifty dollars.⁴⁸ No further record is found of steamers touching at the Humboldt ports until the gold excitement at Gold Bluffs, during the following winter. In December, 1850, the *Chesapeake* was chartered by the Pacific Mining Company to convey its members to the

⁴⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 20, July 30, Aug. 20, 1859.

⁴⁸ San Francisco, *Picayune*, Sept. 9-18, 1850. J. T. Ryan was said to have been the pilot of this boat in crossing the bar of Humboldt Bay, *Humboldt Times*, July 24, 1869.

Gold Bluffs. This was the first steamer to leave San Francisco for the Humboldt ports as a destination. During the next six months, however, nineteen steamers appear in the reports as passing between Trinidad and San Francisco, and about half that number for Humboldt Bay.

While most of these steamers operated only during the few months of the greatest excitement, the *Chesapeake* and the *Sea Gull* continued to make regular visits to these ports. The former rendered good service during the summer of 1851, sometimes making as many as three visits a month, carrying many passengers and much gold dust.⁴⁹ In November, however, the vessel was condemned and sold and so ceased operation.⁵⁰ During this time the *Sea Gull*, which ran between San Francisco and Oregon, stopped at these ports once or twice each month, supplementing the service of the *Chesapeake*, and after the condemnation of the latter it became the only steamer touching at these ports. Unfortunately, in January, 1852, while crossing the Humboldt Bar a heavy sea disabled the vessel and it was driven upon the beach.⁵¹ This was recognized at the time as being a severe blow to the settlements around the bay, and so it proved, for during the next two years steamer visits to these ports were very infrequent.⁵² The steamer *Quickstep* was advertised to take the place of the *Sea Gull* and the *Gen. Warren*, which was wrecked about the same time on the Oregon coast; but in so far as it affected Humboldt this advertisement was misleading, for the shipping news does not show that the voyages of the *Quickstep* at any time included these ports.⁵³

On account of the development of the lumber industry, trade by means of sailing vessels had increased to such an extent by 1854 that it was considered inconsistent that there should be no regular steamer service between Humboldt Bay and San Francisco. To remedy this situation the

⁴⁹ During June, the *Chesapeake* made three trips to these ports, on the 3d and 14th to Humboldt Bay, and the 28th to Trinidad, carrying 280 passengers and \$67,000 during the month. San Francisco, *Herald*.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 10, 1851; Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 180, 235.

⁵¹ San Francisco, *Herald*, Feb. 17, 1852.

⁵² Those listed are: the *Sea Bird* in July, 1852; the *Goliath*, in February, the *Fremont* twice in April, and the *Hunt* in November, 1853; the *Crescent City* in February, 1854. San Francisco, *Herald*, *passim*.

⁵³ San Francisco, *Herald*, Feb. 20, 1852.

people of the bay, assisted by some outside capital, purchased the *Arispe*, a new steamer of 336 tons, valued at \$50,000. Her first trip was made from San Francisco in the middle of April, 1854, and the enterprise appeared to be a profitable venture. But the career of the *Arispe* was short, for after making three trips between these ports the vessel was wrecked near Point Arena and proved a total loss.⁵⁴

Following the wreck of the *Arispe* several months elapsed before any other steamer visited Humboldt. In August, 1854, the *America*, a 1000-ton steamer which ran between San Francisco and Oregon, advertised that Humboldt Bay and Trinidad would be included in its ports of call and that passage might be had at reduced rates.⁵⁵ This vessel arrived at Humboldt Bay during the latter part of August with a large number of passengers, and from that time continued to operate for about three months, when her visits ceased entirely. According to local opinion this was due to influence on the part of the owners of the *Columbia*, a rival steamer line. In support of this contention it was cited that passage from San Francisco to Trinidad had been increased from fifteen to forty-five dollars.⁵⁶

During the following months the small steamer *Humboldt*, which was employed in the lumber trade, furnished what steamer service there was between Humboldt Bay and San Francisco, making trips once or twice a month. In April, 1855, the steamer *Goliah*, which had been running to Crescent City and Oregon, made a bid for the trade of the Humboldt ports also, promising to make trips every ten days if the people of that region would patronize the vessel.⁵⁷ About this time the *Sea Bird* also advertised to run to these and other northern ports, so that by May supposedly three vessels were making regular trips to Humboldt Bay.⁵⁸ This was not the case, however, for during that month the *Humboldt* ceased to operate; while the *Goliah*, which may have found less business than was anticipated, failed to make regular stops; furthermore, two visits during the month of September

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, May 29, 1854; *Alta California*, June 6, 1854; *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 20, 1864.

⁵⁵ San Francisco, *Herald*, Aug. 12, 1854.

⁵⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 2, Nov. 11, 1854.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, 1855.

⁵⁸ San Francisco, *Herald*, May 10, 1855.

appear to have been the extent of the service rendered by the *Sea Bird*.

Early in the spring of 1856 the lack of steamer facilities was made the object of complaint by the local paper, which suggested that the establishment of a mail route by sea would probably aid in securing regular steamer service.⁵⁹ In March the *Goliah* again announced that it would make three trips monthly between San Francisco, Humboldt Bay, and Crescent City,⁶⁰ and although the service rendered was not equal to the announcement made, the steamer did continue to make from one to three trips a month during the remainder of the year. During the months of January and February the service was discontinued, but with March it was again resumed for the summer.⁶¹ In September, 1857, the visits of the *Goliah* abruptly ceased, due, it was claimed, to lack of patronage on the part of the miners and the people of the region. In regard to this condition the *Humboldt Times*, while admitting the lack of success of the steamer, placed the blame upon the officials in charge of the vessel for it had neither maintained its schedule nor taken into account the regular mail steamers, which competed with it for the Oregon trade and occasionally stopped at the Humboldt ports.⁶²

The withdrawal of the *Goliah* did not leave the region entirely without steamer service, as the *Columbia*, of the United States Mail Line, began to make more regular visits to these ports. During the whole period the *Columbia* had been operating between San Francisco and Oregon, and had at times touched at these northern California ports, but the service for this region had been very irregular and therefore not to be relied upon.⁶³ The awarding of a mail contract to the company operating the *Columbia* made a difference in the policy of that steamer, and from that time on Humboldt Bay and Trinidad were included in her route. The mail service was to be semimonthly. This was hailed by

⁵⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 19, 1856.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 29, 1856.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 14, 28, 1857.

⁶² *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1857.

⁶³ Just how often the *Columbia* had visited Humboldt and Trinidad bays can not be determined. It had been agreed as early as 1851 (*ante*, 55) that she should call at the former and was advertised to make these stops in August, 1854, but the shipping news in the San Francisco papers fails to mention her in connection with these ports until May, 1857. It is probable, however, that she stopped at times to land passengers or express.

the people of the region as the beginning of a new era.⁶⁴ It was not long, however, before it was apparent that the interest of the steamship line was not solely in the advancement of Humboldt Bay, and that, although the steamer continued to call at this port, it did not consider it of great importance or profit. It was complained that while the fare had been reduced from San Francisco to Crescent City and Portland, forty dollars was still charged for passage to Humboldt Bay, a higher price than that asked for the ports farther north. The fact that the steamer anchored in midstream instead of coming to the wharf was cited as evidence that they feared that passengers might try to land even though they had bought through tickets.⁶⁵

The Humboldt people not only objected to this treatment but protested also that during the winter months the *Columbia* failed to stop at the bay when it was not convenient to enter. It was charged that in January the vessel had stopped only once on her way both north and south, and that often the incoming mails were carried past to the northern ports, or the outgoing mails left at Humboldt until the following trip.⁶⁶ A meeting of protest was held at Eureka in February, 1858, denouncing the "outrageous management" of the steamship company.⁶⁷ During the following months, either as a result of this protest, or, more probably, better sailing conditions, the *Columbia* made more frequent visits to Humboldt Bay.

While the irregularity in the service of the *Columbia* affected the mail service very materially, the inconvenience to general passenger service was ameliorated by the visits of the steamer *Santa Cruz*, which at this time ran between San Francisco and Umpquah and included the intermediate ports.⁶⁸ The visits of this vessel continued with more or less frequency from November, 1857, until the following July, when, attracted by the gold excitement on the Fraser River it abandoned this run and did not again appear as a visitor to these ports.⁶⁹

⁶⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 10, 1857.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1857.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1858.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 6, 1858.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Nov. 14, 1857.

⁶⁹ *Alta California*, Aug. 1, 1858.

The fall of 1858 found the *Columbia* once again without a competitor for the trade of Humboldt Bay. As long as the weather conditions were favorable the steamer made the stops with a fair degree of regularity; but after the first of November the people of Humboldt again began to feel that they had grounds for complaint, and the local papers once more became strong in their condemnation of the steamship company.⁷⁰ Another indignation meeting was held and a committee appointed, which drew up a statement setting forth the grievances against the company.⁷¹ In the midst of this excitement the *Columbia* made a visit to Humboldt Bay,⁷² but it does not appear to have made regular trips until April, when for the remainder of the year, at least, the service was satisfactory.⁷³

Harbor Improvements. The first official notice taken of Humboldt Bay by government officials appeared in the report of its discovery, made by Lieutenant Ottinger to the Secretary of the Treasury in a letter of June 19, 1850. This notes the advantages of the new bay, which is described as being eighteen miles long with a capacity for three hundred vessels. The entrance at that time was found to be one-fourth of a mile long, and the depth of water on the bar four fathoms.⁷⁴

In 1850 and 1851 a preliminary survey of the bay and its entrance were made, and in 1853 this was more effectively done. At that time a sketch of the entrance to the bay and a preliminary chart were made.⁷⁵ In 1858 a still more thorough survey was made, under the direction of George Davidson. A chart of the bay and its immediate surroundings was compiled at that time, which is of interest not only in showing the channels of the bay but also the location of the towns and roads around the bay.⁷⁶

In March, 1851, the first federal appropriation for Humboldt Bay was secured, when Congress granted \$15,000

⁷⁰ Incoming mail October 25 and outgoing November 5 were the last during the year 1858. *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 11, 25, 1858; Jan. 1, 1859.

⁷¹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 8, 15, 1859.

⁷² *Ibid.*, Jan. 8, 1859.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, May 11, Sept. 24, 1859.

⁷⁴ *Report of the Secretary of the Treasury . . . relating to the security and collection of revenue in California*, Sept. 18, 1850 (Serial 562, Doc. 82), 76. The official notice to mariners, Sept. 25, 1850, San Francisco, *Herald*, Jan. 18, 1851.

⁷⁵ Coast Survey, *Report*, 1853 (Serial 716, Doc. 12), 76-77, appendix 11, 55; *ibid.*, 1854 (Serial 757, Doc. 10), 80-81, sketch 42.

⁷⁶ Coast Survey, *Preliminary survey of Humboldt Bay*, 1858. See chart opposite.

for the erection of a lighthouse at that place.⁷⁷ Although the appropriation had been made action was slow, and the state legislature in February, 1852, passed a resolution urging upon Congress the importance of placing lighthouses and buoys at both Humboldt and Trinidad bays.⁷⁸ In reponse to this request \$5,000 was granted for the placing of a beacon at Humboldt Harbor,⁷⁹ and in the following year an additional five hundred dollars was appropriated to provide buoys for the bay.⁸⁰

The tower for the lighthouse was erected on the north side of the entrance near the channel, but the vessel which was transporting the materials for the light was wrecked and the cargo entirely destroyed.⁸¹ Therefore, although the tower of the lighthouse stood upon the peninsula, there was still no light.⁸² There was much complaint regarding both the delay in equipping the lighthouse and its general location, many arguing that its position was so low that it was of little real value, suggesting Humboldt Point as a much more suitable place.⁸³ In December, 1856, the equipment was received and Humboldt Bay at last had a lighthouse.⁸⁴

In the meantime the state legislature had passed other acts regulating traffic on the bay and the obstruction of its channels. In May, 1853, a law was passed prohibiting the dumping of ballast into the bay except by consent of the harbor commissioners,⁸⁵ and in 1857 similar action was taken forbidding the lumber mills from dumping sawdust and other refuse into the waters of the bay.⁸⁶

One of the objects most desired by the people of Humboldt Bay was that a port of entry should be located at one of its towns. The development of the lumber trade with foreign countries, together with the local enthusiasm for the future of the district, made it appear quite logical that a customs house should be located at their port. In March, 1854, a joint resolution was passed by the legislature asking that a new

⁷⁷ *Statutes at Large*, IX, 628. Act of Mar. 3, 1851.

⁷⁸ *Statutes of California*, 1852:281.

⁷⁹ *Statutes at Large*, X, 117. Act of Aug. 31, 1852.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, X, 242.

⁸¹ *Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury transmitting a copy of a letter of Messrs. Gibbons and Kelly, relative to an appropriation for the erection of light houses on the Pacific Coast* (Serial 727, Doc. 113), 3, 7.

⁸² *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 4, 1854.

⁸³ *Coast Survey, Report*, 1855 (Serial 826), 410.

⁸⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 13, 20, 27, 1856; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 130.

⁸⁵ *Statutes of California*, 1853:192.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 1857:66.

collection district be formed, with Humboldt Bay as a port of entry.⁸⁷ In accordance with this, the Senate instructed its committee on commerce to inquire into the expediency of creating such a new district.⁸⁸ At the same time the secretary of the treasury recommended the passage of a law making Union a port of entry.⁸⁹ The senate, in accordance with the report of its committee, took favorable action in the matter, but in the lower house it was less fortunate.⁹⁰

In 1856 the agitation was again taken up, when the state legislature passed a resolution asking that Bucksport be made a port of entry.⁹¹ This time it was taken before Congress in connection with the agitation for a land office on the bay.⁹² Again the project failed, much to the dissatisfaction of the people of the bay region, who believed that a port of entry was all that was needed to enable them to compete with the other lumber regions for the foreign trade.⁹³ Later efforts to secure this end resulted in similar failures.⁹⁴

Local Commerce on Humboldt Bay and Eel River. During the particular period under consideration lack of good roads connecting the towns around the bay gave the local commerce on the bay itself much greater importance than would otherwise have been the case. Until 1860 no road had been built connecting Eureka and Union, and the roads leading southward were unsatisfactory.⁹⁵ The chief centers for this local shipping were Union for the head of the bay, Eureka and Bucksport for the central area, and Table Bluff for the southern bay district. Shipping direct from Eel River had not proved successful owing to the difficulty of crossing the bar at the mouth of the river; consequently the southern arm of the bay was used for the transportation of trade to and from Eel River Valley.

⁸⁷ In this it was urged that "the manufacturing and commercial interests of Humboldt Bay are rapidly growing into importance, showing from official statistics as large an exportation of lumber as from any one port upon the coast." *Statutes of California*, 1854 (Kerr): 267, Mar. 10, 1854.

⁸⁸ *Journal of the Senate of the United States* . . . first session of the thirty-third Congress, 1853-1854 (Serial 689), 324.

⁸⁹ *Report of the Secretary of the Treasury communicating* . . . a draft of a general revenue law, July 11, 1854 (Serial 702, Doc. 77), 27.

⁹⁰ *Senate Journal*, 33 Cong., 1 sess. (689), 460. *Journal of the House of Representatives* . . . first session of the thirty-third Congress, 1853-1854 (Serial 709), 1063, 1148.

⁹¹ *Resolution of the Legislature of California in favor of the establishment of a collection district in the northern part of that state, and of a port of entry at Bucksport, in said state*, Feb. 20, 26, 1856 (Serial 835, Doc. 40).

⁹² *Humboldt Times*, May 31, 1856.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, 1856.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 9, Nov. 5, 1859.

⁹⁵ *Ante*, 73-75.

Information is not available as to when vessels were first put upon the bay for the specific purpose of local trade, but that there was much rivalry in this business by the fall of 1854 is evident from the fact that for a time the Eureka and Union Transportation Company offered free transportation between these two places.⁹⁶ During this year the steamer *Glide* began to run between these ports, and for the next five years was an important factor in local shipping.⁹⁷ In 1857 Capt. Vansant placed the sloop *Meteor* in competition with the *Glide*, making regular trips from Union to Myers Landing at Table Bluff, via Eureka and Bucksport, the trip being made every other day. In cooperation with this vessel a team was employed between Myers Landing and the Eel River settlements.⁹⁸ By 1859 the *Glide* had served its time and was dismantled, the hull being taken as a barge, while the engines were placed in a new steamer then under construction at Bucksport.⁹⁹ This new vessel launched early in 1860, was named the *Pert*, and operated in place of the *Glide*.¹⁰⁰

In the early years navigation of Eel River had been looked upon with considerable favor. In 1850 the *General Morgan* party explored the river and considered it navigable,¹⁰¹ and soon afterward the schooner *Ryerson* crossed the bar, thinking it was the Trinity River, and projected a settlement near its mouth.¹⁰² Lieut. McArthur, in making a report for the Coast Survey in 1850, stated that there were nine feet of water on the bar at the mouth of the river, but that the entrance was narrow and the swells so high as to render it difficult and dangerous for sailing vessels. He considered that steamers could enter and depart without difficulty.¹⁰³

During these earlier years shipping on Eel River was not of such value as to be a sufficient stimulus to risk the hazard

⁹⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 21, 1854.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 3, May 12, Aug. 4, Sept. 1, 1855; Sawyer's Landing is mentioned as used by the *Glide*, *ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1856; and Myers Landing, *ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1857, Oct. 8, 1859.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, Apr. 11, 1857.

⁹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 8, 1859.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 26, Dec. 3, 1859; Jan. 21, 1860.

¹⁰¹ *Ante*, 47.

¹⁰² This town was to be known as Trinity City and doubtless existed for a time as a place of much importance in the minds of its founders. The discovery that the river was not the Trinity soon put an end to its existence. As late as 1863 it was claimed that the street names could be seen near Mosely's fishery. *Alta California*, May 1, 1850; *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 7, 1863; Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*.

¹⁰³ Coast Survey, *Report*, 1850 (Serial 588, Doc. 7), 124.

of the bar, although the value of the river as an easy means of transportation was recognized. The party from the *General Morgan*, finding the return of their vessel blocked by the heavy seas, took their small boats overland around Table Bluff to Humboldt Bay, and from this were led to consider the feasibility of cutting a canal to join the waters of Eel River and Humboldt Bay.¹⁰⁴ This idea was never carried out although it was taken up again in 1859 and presented to the state legislature.¹⁰⁵

On the other hand, in 1854, a few men, organized as the Humboldt Bay and Mad River Canal Company, did succeed in digging a channel between the bay and Mad River.¹⁰⁶ This company was incorporated with a capital of \$3,000, January 10, 1854, for the purpose of¹⁰⁷

. . . taking the waters of Mad River in a canal in order to open a communication between Mad River, and a certain slough . . . leading into Humboldt Bay, for the purpose of floating timber from Mad River into Humboldt Bay and for such other purposes as the same may be deemed practical and profitable.

There is little information regarding the success of this venture.

Shipbuilding, 1850-1859. Two lines of activity which are closely related to commerce and shipping yet remain to be considered: these are shipbuilding and the fisheries. Several places along the coast early took up the shipbuilding industry, but in 1854 Humboldt Bay seemed to be in the lead, by virtue of having launched a small steamer built at the bay by Allen & Company.¹⁰⁸ This was the *Glide*, already mentioned in connection with the local trade on the bay. Other vessels followed, among them the schooner *Petrel*, built at Eureka in 1858,¹⁰⁹ and another built on the peninsula by Montgomery in 1859.¹¹⁰ In 1859 the *Glide* was converted into a barge and her engines placed in the new steamer *Pert* as already related.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁴ *Alta California*, Apr. 24, 1850; Aug. 26, 1851; Gibbs also suggested this, 1851 Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 129.

¹⁰⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 19, 1859.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, Dec. 2, 1854.

¹⁰⁷ Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of incorporation*, H.

¹⁰⁸ Bancroft, *California*, VII, 79; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 145; *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 23, 1854.

¹⁰⁹ *Humboldt Times*, May 5, 1858.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Apr. 2, 1859. This vessel had a length of 61 feet and a beam of 16.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 8, 1859; Jan. 21, 1860, *ante*, 133.

The Fisheries: Whale and Shark Fishing, 1855-1859. The fishing industry in Humboldt has since its inception been of no small importance. Little is known of this business prior to 1854, but at that date both whale and shark-fishing, as well as salmon fisheries, were attracting much attention. In January, 1855, a Canton packet was off the bar several days hunting whales, but with little success.¹¹² The steam tug *Mary Ann*, which was equipped with a whaling outfit, had more success, for during the summer her crew succeeded in capturing several whales. These were tried out at Humboldt Point, one whale yielding twenty-eight barrels of oil.

After this year attention was turned to shark-fishing. Many were to be found in Humboldt Bay, and the oil secured from them was considered much superior to whale oil.¹¹³ In June, 1856, a crew operating the *Sam Slick* made very profitable returns in this business. In one day, it was reported, they secured enough to yield them three hundred gallons of oil.¹¹⁴ This oil was sold by the local merchants and was recommended for both machinery and lighting purposes.¹¹⁵ In the summer of 1857 a small fleet of fishing boats was ready to welcome the coming of the sharks into the bay, for by this time it had become a regular industry during the summer months.¹¹⁶ During the season of 1858 the sharks were less numerous and the yield of oil was but 250 gallons, but the next year twice that amount was taken during the season of three months.¹¹⁷

Salmon Fisheries. As might be expected the most important branch of the fishing business was that of the salmon fisheries. These were located principally at the mouth of Eel River, although some business was also done on Mad River.¹¹⁸ Fishing began to some extent on Eel River as early as 1851,¹¹⁹ but in 1853 J. H. Dungan began to operate on this river in a more extensive manner, and during the following year other companies were formed.¹²⁰ In 1857 according to official reports, there were produced by the

¹¹² *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 20, July 28, Aug. 18, 25, 1855.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, May 10, Aug. 23, 1856.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, June 7, 1856.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Aug. 23, Sept. 6, 1856.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, June 27, 1857.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1858; Aug. 20, 1859.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Nov. 27, 1858.

¹¹⁹ Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*.

¹²⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 29, 1859; Sept. 23, 1854.

Eel River fisheries 2000 barrels of cured fish, besides 50,000 pounds of smoked salmon, prepared for consumption in the immediate locality or in the mines. Markets for these fish were found in Australia, China, and the Sandwich Islands, and some were shipped to New York.¹²¹ The salmon of Eel River were considered superior in quality to any others in the state, the Sacramento River fisheries being the chief competitor in this trade.¹²² In 1859 the fisheries succeeded in securing the passage of an act giving them the exclusive privilege of fishing upon the river if they controlled the banks of the stream.¹²³ According to the census of 1860 there were at that time seven establishments engaged in salmon fishing in Humboldt County. These represented a capital of \$17,500 and employed seventy men.¹²⁴

¹²¹ United States, *Eighth census*, 1860, *Mortality, Property*, etc. (Serial 1205), 537.

¹²² Sacramento River salmon sold for eight dollars a barrel, Eel River for ten. Oregon salmon was worth eleven. *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 3, Sept. 11, 1858.

¹²³ *Statutes of California*, 1859:298.

¹²⁴ United States, *Eighth census*, 1860, *Manufactures*, (Serial 1204), 25.

A good description of these fisheries in 1859 is given in the *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 29, 1859. Those operating at that time were J. H. Dungan, who expected to take 1000 bbls. during the season; Thomas Worth, 600 bbls.; Gilman & Skinner, 1000 bbls.; John Mosely, 800 bbls.; Wm. Ellery & Brother; Parcels & Nicholson, 600 bbls.; Dickerman & Miller, 400 bbls., besides smoked salmon; Martin & Plummer, 1300 bbls.

CHAPTER IX

EARLY RELATIONS WITH THE INDIANS, 1849-1859

Early Reception of the Whites, 1849-1851. At the beginning of the immigration of the white settlers into this section of California there was little opposition on the part of the native peoples. The newcomers had many articles of trade which while of little intrinsic value were greatly prized by the natives; and, what was more important, the superior weapons of the white man made efforts at resistance not only useless but disastrous; while, on the other hand, the full meaning of the invasion of their lands and hunting grounds was at first not fully realized by them.

The party led by Dr. Josiah Gregg encountered no serious difficulty with the Indians, who were overawed by the appearance of the strangers with the mysterious weapons, and at times were induced to render needed aid to the company.¹ Similar reports were made by various other exploring parties when they came into the region.² When, however, the Indians saw the strangers actually taking possession of their village sites they at first prepared to resist them. On the immediate coast this hostility amounted to little, but in the interior the relationship between the two races was less harmonious.³ During the late summer of 1850, two persons were reported killed by Indians in the redwoods about eighteen miles from Union; at about the same time accounts of hostility were received from the forks of the Salmon River, where in retaliation the whites had burned three villages and killed some fifty or sixty of the natives.⁴ It was also reported that during this year Friar, a

¹ At the mouth of the South Fork of the Trinity they first encountered wild Indians, who acted in a manner which aroused their suspicions. A skillful exhibition of the use of their fire arms, however, quelled all hostile spirit. At Trinidad the Indians were friendly, as were also those around the bay, and it was only on the South Fork of Eel River that any real treachery appeared on the part of the Indians. L. K. Wood, *Narrative*, which forms the basis for the account, *ante*, 38, n. 5.

² E. H. Howard and the "Laura Virginia" party, Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 99-100.

³ In May, the "Eclipse" party after landing at Bucksport was forced to leave on account of an Indian attack, *Alta California*, May 25, 1850. In July Indians were reported numerous and troublesome at Trinidad, *ibid.*, July 8, 1850; LaMotte, *Statement*, MS., 6-9.

⁴ *Alta California*, Aug. 20, 22, 1850. The numbers here are very probably exaggerated. This may have been the same attack spoken of by Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 135.

settler in Eel River Valley, was killed by the Indians and that his brother to even the score had killed a large number of them.⁵

During the year 1851 the trouble between the Indians and the whites became more acute. The packers and miners used little caution in their treatment of the Indians, many regarding the latter as their natural enemies, to be shot down whenever opportunity offered.⁶ The Indians were unable to discriminate between these vicious white men and the more peaceful ones, and as a result when an Indian was killed some white man paid the penalty, and unfortunately it was seldom the man who had committed the wrong. Nor were the whites themselves at all times above this practice, for seldom was the effort made to apprehend the real offender among the Indians, but rather a general attack, followed on the nearest rancheria.⁷

Redick McKee Expedition, 1851. Probably the most noteworthy event in relation to Indian affairs in northern California during the early fifties was the expedition made by Colonel Redick McKee, one of the United States Indian agents in California. McKee, with a large escort, left Sonoma on the eleventh of August, 1851, to visit and make treaties with the various Indian tribes of the coast region north of San Francisco. The expedition was escorted by a company of soldiers under command of Brigadier Major Wessels, and at the start was composed of seventy men, one hundred forty mules and horses, and one hundred and sixty head of cattle.⁸

The route taken followed closely the Sonoma trail and entered the Humboldt Bay region by way of the South

⁵ La Motte, *Statement*, MS., 10-11.

⁶ See the statements of Lindsey, Minor and others. In the fall of 1851, a chief near the junction of the Trinity and Klamath rivers showed a bone with notches upon it indicating that twenty-seven Indians had been killed by the whites, whereas they had killed but twenty-six white men. Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 145.

⁷ Department of Interior, *Report, communicating . . . a copy of the correspondence between the Department of the Interior and the Indian agents in California*. Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 155. Here McKee gives an example of this, which unfortunately was far too common. For a general discussion of the beginning of Indian hostility see Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 147-150. Hittell, *California*, III, also discusses this question rather fully in his chapters on the Indians.

⁸ Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 134. The published records of this expedition are full of valuable information regarding the country and natives. The report referred to contains (pp. 134-180) the minutes of the expedition as kept by its secretary, John McKee; and (pp. 181-403) the correspondence in reference to the expedition. In addition to this report, the journal of George Gibbs, the interpreter of the party, is given in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 99-177.

Fork of Eel River.⁹ From place to place the expedition halted to give out beef and presents to the Indians and make peaceful settlement with them. In the lower Eel River Valley the Indians were found to be in a very poor condition, and it was proposed to set off a reservation for them. A tract was selected for this purpose along the coast, on the south side of the river, extending from its mouth thirteen miles toward Cape Mendocino and inland a distance of six miles. Mr. C. A. Robeson, a settler who had married an Indian woman, was placed in charge of the projected reservation, and with him were left three yoke of oxen and the necessary implements for cultivating a portion of the land for the Indians.¹⁰

After visiting the bay settlements at Humboldt City and Union¹¹ the expedition crossed to the Klamath River region, passing through the lands of the Chilula Indians, known usually as the Redwood or Bald Hills Indians. This tribe then had a bad reputation among the packers, one of the camps of the party being called "Bloody Camp" because of the fact that two whites had been killed there by the Indians; while another was known as "Burnt Ranch" from the retaliation taken by the whites.¹²

A general meeting of the Indians of the surrounding region was held early in October, at Durkee's Ferry, at the junction of the Trinity and Klamath rivers. At this time presents were distributed among the natives, and after an eloquent speech delivered by the Indian agent, in which they were informed of the great numbers of the white men and their desire to make peace, treaties were signed with the twenty-four bands assembled there, the Bald Hills and Redwood Creek Indians not being represented.¹³

After the meeting at Durkee's Ferry the expedition continued up the Klamath River, distributing food and

⁹ *Ante*, 65 *et seq.*

¹⁰ Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 130; Department of the Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 153, 215; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 457-461. For later comment on Robeson, see *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 28, 1871.

¹¹ *Ante*, 55.

¹² Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 134, 135. This must not be confused with the place of the same name on the main branch of the Trinity.

¹³ McKee, in Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 158-162. For the text of this treaty see *Message from the President of the United States, communicating eighteen treaties made with Indians in California*, . . . 1851-1852. Bledsoe relates that the owner of the ferry, whom he calls Walker, made use of his position as interpreter of the occasion to add the injunction that the Indians were to protect the ferry until the return of the Indian agent. Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 158-161.

presents at the various Indian villages and telling them of their desire for peace, while at the same time the whites were exhorted to refrain from any mistreatment of the Indians.¹⁴ Having proceeded up the river to Scott's Valley, Major Wessels decided that owing to the approach of the rainy season, it would be necessary for him to return to Benicia as soon as possible in order to prevent his detachment from being trapped in the mountains. Leaving a small part of the pack train with McKee the military escort crossed over the mountains into the Sacramento Valley.¹⁵ The Indian agent with his diminished party remained to meet with the Indians of the place, the greater majority of whom were at that time away from their usual homes. Some were off on hunting expeditions, while others remained away through fear of some treachery on the part of the white men. Finally, after much delay, a meeting was held and a treaty made whereby it was hoped that peaceful relations would be established between the two races, a portion of the valley being granted to the Indians as a reservation. Having accomplished this mission the party returned to San Francisco by way of Humboldt Bay.¹⁶

The agent appeared well pleased with the results of the expedition, for, although admitting that the cost had been above what he had expected, he declared:

Considering the results which have happily followed, the expenses are trifling. Taken as a whole, I doubt whether ever, in the history of Indian negotiations in this or any other country, as much work has been done, as much positive good effected, and as many evils averted with such comparatively inadequate means at command.¹⁷

Unfortunately, however, not everyone attached the same importance to the service rendered by Colonel McKee. When the legislature met in the session of 1852 it took up the matter regarding these Indian treaties. In the assembly a committee on Indian Reservations was appointed, which

¹⁴ Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 166. The Indians complained especially of one named "Wooley." *Ibid.*, 164, 166.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 168-169; Gibbs, in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 163.

¹⁶ *Message from the President of the United States, communicating eighteen treaties made with Indians in California . . . 1851-1852:64-69*; Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 178-180, 219-228, 235-236.

¹⁷ McKee to Lea, Feb. 17, 1852, in Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 284.

presented resolutions denouncing the policy of the Indian agents in giving land to the Indians for reservation purposes.¹⁸ Only the personal appeal of two of the agents was able to prevent the senate from endorsing this report in the form of a joint resolution to Congress.¹⁹ The opposition to the treaties showed itself again, however, when they came up before the United States Senate for ratification and they were rejected.²⁰

Fort Humboldt Established, 1853. Notwithstanding the controversy between the various officials and departments of the government which followed the making of the treaties, the Indians appear to have accepted them in good faith for they caused little trouble except for a few thefts by Indians not connected with the treaties.²¹ There was, however, a strong sentiment in California that the Indians should be entirely removed from the state. This had made itself felt in opposition to the proposed treaties, and tended to an exaggeration of the reports of the hostility of the Indians toward the whites. It doubtless also encouraged greater boldness in the more vicious element who were anxious for the extermination of the red men.

In April, 1852, several of the senators from the northern portion of the state presented a statement to Governor Bigler in which they declared that during the past "few months" 130 white people had been killed and \$240,000 worth of property destroyed by the Indians of their counties.²² On the other hand, and almost coincident with it, Colonel McKee had addressed a letter to the governor severely blaming the whites of this region for their unjustifiable

¹⁸ *Assembly journal*, 3d sess. (1852), 43, 45, 202-205, 396-397.

¹⁹ McKee to Fillmore, Apr. 3, 1853, in Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 308, 310.

²⁰ President, *Annual message*, Dec. 6, 1852 (Serial 673), 10, 32. The question of the policy of the Indian agents and commissioners in California is far too large a subject to be considered profitably in this present work. The reading of the journals and letters of the McKee expedition naturally seems to justify his policy, which indeed, was characterized by Supt. Beale, just after he had taken office superseding these agents, as "proper and expedient, under the circumstances," (Department of the Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 [Serial 688, Doc. 4], 326); and McKee is emphatic in saying that the opposition was due merely to political jealousy against the administration. (McKee to Fillmore, *ibid.*, 308, and McKee to Lea, *ibid.*, 310). Later investigation seemed, however, to discredit the acts of the agents, especially in regard to beef contracts. (Beale to Lea, Sept. 16, 1852, *ibid.*, 361). Popular opinion of the time may be seen in the stories told by local historians discrediting the work of McKee. *Ante*, 139, n. 13, which is from Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 158-161; see also Wells, *Siskiyou County*, 114, Hittell, *California*, 111, 902, and Bancroft, *California*, VI, 627, and especially Ellison, "*The Federal Indian Policy in California*."

²¹ *Alta California*, Mar. 21, 1852.

²² *Senate journal*, 3d sess. (1852), 703-704.

hostility toward the Indians and urging that some action be taken to punish the offenders. In support of his statement he cited the murder of fifteen or twenty Indians on Humboldt Bay near the mouth of Elk River in February, and a similar outrage in March when nearly twice that number were killed on the Klamath River.²³ These reports made it clear to the mind of the governor that some action must be taken, but in this his sympathies all lay on the side of the whites, regardless of their character.²⁴

In the meantime, appeal was also made by the various elements to Brigadier General Hitchcock, the commander of the Pacific Division of the United States Army, asking the aid of the troops in settling the difficulties.²⁵ Among others Colonel McKee desired that a small post be established at each of the proposed reservations, and suggested that a central supply depot be located on Humboldt Bay. As a result of this correspondence General Hitchcock promised that a military post would be established in the region as soon as the necessary arrangements could be made,²⁶ and two companies of the fourth regiment of United States Infantry, which arrived in California in August, were selected to establish a post on Humboldt Bay. These troops were in command of Brevet Lieutenant Colonel R. C. Buchanan, and arrived at the bay in January, 1853. The high tableland behind Bucksport, then a town superior to Eureka, was selected as the proper location for the new military post, which from that time on was known as Fort Humboldt.²⁷

²³ *Senate journal* 3d sess. (1852), 712, 714; Dept. of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853, 310. A good account of this controversy is given in Hittell, *California*, III, 904, 911. Loud, *Ethnogeography and archaeology of the Wiyot territory*, finds that the whites were invariably to blame.

²⁴ The spirit of the administration may be seen from the following extract taken from his letter to McKee, Apr. 9, 1852: "I assure you, sir, that I deplore the unsettled condition of affairs in the North; but the settlement of new countries, and the progress of civilization, have always been attended with perils. The career of civilization, under the auspices of the American people, has heretofore been interrupted by no dangers, and daunted by no perils. Its progress has been an ovation—steady, august, and resistless." Department of Interior, *Report*, Mar. 17, 1853 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 312, and *Senate Journal*, 3d sess. (1852), 714.

²⁵ Governor Bigler urged the protection of the life and property of the whites, *Senate journal*, 3d sess. (1852), 705-706; McKee was interested in protecting the "generally harmless and inoffensive Indians," *ibid.*, 716-717; the people of Humboldt Bay desired aid against both Indians and "abandoned whites." *Alta California*, Mar. 21, 1852.

²⁶ *Senate journal*, 3d sess. (1852), 711.

²⁷ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 163; San Francisco, *Herald*, Feb. 5, 1853; Secretary of War, *Report*, 1853 (Serial 691), 122.

*The Red Cap War, 1855.*²⁸ During the years 1853 and 1854, notwithstanding a general ill feeling between the Indians and the whites, there was no general Indian uprising. There was, however, some loss of life through attacks by the Indians, which were usually followed by retaliation from the other side.

In January, 1855, it was evident that trouble was imminent. The miners on the Klamath deserted their diggings and collected at the larger camps for protection, while the Indians removed their women and children to the mountains. On January 6 a meeting was held at Orleans Bar and it was decided to take from the Indians any weapons in their possession and to act vigorously against whites who might be found guilty of selling arms to them. Many of the Indians complied with the demand for their weapons, but a few, led by the Red Caps, resisted, and when an attempt was made to disarm them two whites were killed.²⁹ This was the signal for war. The miners appealed for aid to Colonel Buchanan at Fort Humboldt and to the people of the coast towns. At Trinidad a volunteer company was formed and made an attack upon the Indians of the lower Klamath, who also showed signs of hostility. Captain Judah, having been sent out by Colonel Buchanan, reached the junction of the Klamath and Trinity the latter part of January and began negotiations with the Indians. The Indians of that particular locality soon surrendered themselves to him and offered to aid in subduing the more hostile tribes. The miners at first refused to listen to any terms of peace, but Judah was firm and a settlement seemed near when he was suddenly recalled by Colonel Buchanan.

By this time the trouble had spread all up and down the Klamath, and the feeling among the miners, especially at Orleans Bar, was bitter toward the Indians. It was all that the more sober-minded could do to prevent a wholesale slaughter of all the Indians of the region. At the suggestion of Roseborough, the Indian agent at Fort Jones, several volunteer companies were organized to conquer the troublesome Red Caps. While following the lead of Indians who

²⁸ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 154-176, refers to this as the Klamath War. While it did involve that region, the Red Cap tribe was the real center of the trouble. Hittell, *California*, III, 912-915, gives an account based on Bledsoe.

²⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 13, 20, 27, 1855; Minor, *Reminiscences*, MS., 3-4.

offered their services one company was led into ambush, but fortunately escaped without injury to its men. Summary punishment was meted out to the treacherous natives, twenty-six of their number being killed, twenty-three taken prisoners, and two of their villages destroyed.

This event aroused the people of the coast towns to a more complete realization of the seriousness of the trouble, and an appeal was made to the governor for additional aid, as Colonel Buchanan had sent no one to replace Captain Judah and the volunteer companies did not act in harmony. This was the situation when news was received that S. G. Whipple had been appointed special Indian agent for Klamath and Humboldt counties, and also that Captain Judah was to be sent out again, to cooperate with Whipple. The volunteer companies were immediately dismissed and a general meeting of the Indians of the lower Klamath was called on April 7. The Indians seemed to have confidence in the sincerity of Captain Judah and promised to aid in the punishment of their hostile neighbors. A large number of the Red Caps were induced to surrender and prospects were favorable for an early settlement when Judah was once again recalled, his place being taken by Captain Jones.

It seemed to Agent Whipple that the most feasible solution of the difficulty was to grant the Indians a limited district as a reservation, and they were accordingly given a strip of country one mile in width on each side of the Klamath River, running from its mouth inland a distance of twenty miles. This was afterward approved by the government and became known as the Klamath Reservation.³⁰ By June the war was brought to a close, the Red Cap Indians being made to surrender and accept the reservation, while the miners were glad once more to return to their work.

Continued Trouble, 1856-1857. During the two years following the trouble with the Red Caps there was no serious uprising of the Indians of this region, although depredations and murders continued, and at times there was great apprehension lest a general war might suddenly break out. In

³⁰ This must not be confused with the Klamath Lake Reservation in southern Oregon. This reservation was set off by the President's order dated Nov. 16, 1855, the area being limited to 25,000 acres in accordance with a former statute. *Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior*, 1886, 302-303; *Decisions in cases relating to the public lands*, XII, 563.

the spring of 1856 the actions of the Hoopa Indians especially aroused the suspicions of the white settlers of that valley. These Indians were well formed physically and independent in nature, and during the wars with the Red Caps had succeeded in getting large quantities of arms and ammunition. During March the settlers became much alarmed, and messengers were sent to the mining region and to the bay towns for aid, while the settlers themselves gathered at Kleiser's mill. Captain Snyder, a resident of the valley who was well known to the Indians, hastened from Union with instructions to do what he could to bring about a peaceful settlement. Going to the Indians without arms or an escort he secured their attention. They protested their willingness for peace, and as evidence of their good faith brought in at his suggestion twelve guns, which were soon followed by eleven others, and once more peaceful relations were restored.³¹

During the later months of the year disturbances occurred in various parts of the region, but none involved any large area. In August and September the people of Union and the Mad River region were aroused by reports of trouble on Redwood Creek and at Angel's Ranch, and companies of men were sent out to punish the disturbing natives. Two rancherias were attacked and seventeen Indians killed.³² The southern part of the county was also having trouble. In October a man on Bear River was attacked and mortally wounded by Indians who seem to have committed the deed in order to secure his rifle. Retaliation followed; since a small band of Indians near Grizzly Bluff were believed to be the guilty ones, their rancheria was attacked and seven of their number killed.³³

While these depredations and murders were a source of vexation to the whites they did not prevent the expansion of settlement even into the more remote parts of the region. The winter of 1856-1857 proved a hard one for both settlers and Indians, and all were too busily engaged in contending with the elements to provoke trouble with each other.³⁴

³¹ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 5, 19, 1856; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 204-205.

³² Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 207-208.

³³ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 1, 8, 15, 1856; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 209-210. In March an attack had also been made on Cooper's Mills.

³⁴ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 212-216.

With the coming of the new year the various lines of activity in the region took on an air of prosperity. Commerce with the mines attained its greatest success during that year, and reports of trouble between the settlers and the Indians were few.

*The War with the Mad River Indians, 1858-1859.*³⁵ Early in the year 1858 it became evident that peaceful relationship between the two races was not to be continued long. This first became evident in February when the settlers took up a quarrel between a negro and his Indian wife, who belonged to the Redwood and Mad River tribes.³⁶ A few months later matters were hastened to a more acute stage by the murder of Wm. E. Ross, a packer who was shot from ambush while passing over the Trinity trail near Grouse Creek.³⁷ Since Ross was considered to have been a peaceful man and at the time was engaged in his regular business this hostile act did much to arouse the settlers to decisive action. Volunteer companies were now organized, one of which, under Captain Bell, was placed at Pardee's ranch on the trail to Trinity and another farther up Mad River, near the Buttés.³⁸ In its first engagement Bell's company was ambushed by a large party of Indians and one of the men killed. To make matters worse, it was learned that degraded whites were fomenting the trouble in order to sell arms to the Indians,³⁹ or to vent their baser passions, a domesticated Indian boy having been wantonly shot down while driving a herd of mules from Kneeland Prairie to Eureka.⁴⁰

As time passed the stubborn resistance of the Indians revealed the seriousness of the situation, so public meetings

³⁵ I have taken the title of "Mad River" in the place of "Wintoon" as used by Bledsoe and Hittell. The Wintuns were a large tribe or family occupying the western part of the Sacramento Valley, and extended only to the eastern portion of the present limits of Humboldt County along the South Fork of the Trinity. The activities of this war were all located to the west of this territory, the outbreak occurring near Angel's Ranch, which is at the extreme western part of the Whilkut, or Mad River territory. In similar manner the limit of hostility being near Showers Pass coincides with the Whilkut boundaries. On the north, however, disturbances on the lower Redwood indicate that the Chilula, or Redwood tribe was also involved. The two were of the same stock (Athapascan) and had common grievances against the whites. See *ante*, 14.

³⁶ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 229-230; *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 20, 1858.

³⁷ *Humboldt Times*, June 5, 12, 19, and especially 26, 1858; San Francisco, *Bulletin*, June 28, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 231-232.

³⁸ *Humboldt Times*, July 17, 1858; San Francisco, *Bulletin*, July 26, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 233-234. The Pardee Ranch was located near Maple Creek east of Mad River. See map *infra*, 163.

³⁹ *Humboldt Times*, July 24, 1858.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 7, 1858.

were called at Union and Eureka to consider plans of action.⁴¹ Many favored a war of extermination, but more conservative counsels prevailed. A tax of fifty cents per hundred dollars was levied by the people of Union, and in Eureka a similar result was obtained by subscription. Although volunteers were already active against the Indians they were without legal standing or financial backing, so it was felt necessary to effect a more regular military organization. If possible that was to be secured through the state officials, but if this failed it was decided that the settlers would act independently and maintain the troops themselves.⁴²

While these plans were being considered a letter was received from Governor Weller in which it was stated that he had called upon the commander of the United States forces in the Pacific Division to send troops to clear the road between Weaverville and Humboldt Bay; and since he had been informed that there were insufficient regular troops for this purpose he had dispatched Adjutant General Kibbe to Weaverville to organize a company of the state militia if the necessity for such action still existed.⁴³ Meanwhile word was received that a new detachment of federal troops was being sent to Fort Humboldt. These arrived during the latter part of September, but were too few in number and, being deficient in both military discipline and knowledge of Indian fighting, they were looked upon by the people of Humboldt Bay as prejudicial to their interest rather than otherwise, especially since it deprived them of a strong argument for organizing a militia company such as was being formed in Weaverville under General Kibbe.⁴⁴

Although both the state officials and the United States military authorities appeared to have an interest in the situation, T. J. Henley, then Superintendent of Indian Affairs for California, refused to take note of these conditions. There were many complaints regarding the conduct of the Klamath and Mendocino reservations because the Indians were not being confined there, but these petitions

⁴¹ In an attack Bell's company lost one man, Miller, and Capt. Winslet who was wounded during August; in September Boynton was also killed. *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 7, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 239.

⁴² *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 18, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 240-246.

⁴³ Gen. Markall to Gov. Weller, Sept. 6, 1858; Weller to Wiley, Sept. 7, 1858, given in Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 249-250.

⁴⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 24, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 251.

met with no response.⁴⁵ It is of interest to note the complacent tone of the annual report sent by him to Washington just at the time when the feeling of the people of the Humboldt region was most intense.⁴⁶ He reports:

It is gratifying to be able to state that a condition of uninterrupted peace prevails among the Indians in every portion of the State, and that there is to be apprehended no danger of future disturbances so long as the existing policy is pursued.

On the twenty-sixth of September the town of Union was thrown into confusion by the alarm of Indians.⁴⁷ At ten o'clock in the evening a number of peaceful Mad River Indians reported that a hostile mountain band had attacked their village and were murdering their people. Immediately the women and children of the town were gathered into the brick store building and the men set out to investigate. It was found to be a false alarm, but it nevertheless aroused the people to a realization of the danger of their position and severe criticism was heaped upon Major Rains⁴⁸ of Fort Humboldt for keeping all the troops safely at the fort when they should have been aiding in the protection of the lives and property of the settlers. No troops were sent out until the arrival of Captain Underwood on October 2. This officer was placed in charge of operations and with thirty-six men took up his position near the Pardee Ranch, where his men were employed chiefly in acting as escorts for the pack trains while crossing the mountains.⁴⁹

The Kibbe Guards. While these events were taking place on the coast, two companies, later known as the Kibbe Guards, were being enrolled by the adjutant general in Trinity County. A company of seventy was enlisted at Weaverville, and another of eighty, under Captain Messec, at Big Bar.⁵⁰ These men did not have military training, but lacked neither skill nor determination when it came to fighting Indians.

⁴⁵For complaints regarding the reservations, *Humboldt Times*, June 19 (Mattole), July 17, 31, Aug. 7, 14, Oct. 16, 1858.

⁴⁶Henley to Mix, Sept. 4, 1858, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1858:283-285. Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 251-252. Col. Snyder was sent to San Francisco for the purpose of informing the agent personally of the real condition of affairs.

⁴⁷*Humboldt Times*, Oct. 2, 1858; San Francisco, *Bulletin*, Oct. 12, 1858.

⁴⁸Rains had succeeded to the command at Ft. Humboldt in 1856. Secretary of War, *Report*, 1856-1857 (Serial 876, Doc. 5), 246.

⁴⁹San Francisco, *Bulletin*, Oct. 12, 28, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 252-255.

⁵⁰Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 255.

The first engagement of the newly organized forces took place, under Captain Messec, near the Pardee Ranch on October 26.⁵¹ One of the volunteers was badly wounded, but the Indians suffered a more severe loss, four of the number being killed and several taken prisoners. After this defeat the Indians withdrew farther up the river into the Yager Creek district, where they formed a winter camp. Captain Messec led his forces in pursuit, and on November 13 and 14 attacked them in the neighborhood of Shower's Pass, killing a number and taking twenty-six prisoners. Having confined the Indians to a small area it was important that some decisive action be taken before the winter snows should have melted from the mountains. This was effected on the night of December 21, when the Indian camps were surrounded and eighty-four prisoners taken.⁵²

Having been thus successful in the attack upon the main camp, the volunteers next turned their attention to other bands, either capturing them or driving them farther into the mountains. While scouring the mountains between Redwood Creek and Hoopa Valley they routed a band of Indians who fled toward the coast in the vicinity of Dow's Prairie. Not anticipating much trouble, a small company of the volunteers took up the pursuit and made an attack, when to their surprise the hostiles were found to number about one hundred and fifty; the whites stood their ground and, in fact, took thirteen prisoners, but two of their number were wounded and they were forced to retreat. About the same time a company of men was attacked from ambush in the neighborhood of Albee's Ranch, on Redwood Creek, one of the men being badly wounded.⁵³ The reports of these engagements were depressing to the whites and encouraging to the Indians, but it was evident that the latter were being gradually weakened.

The problem of disposing of the prisoners was becoming serious, for by January, 1859, 120 were reported in the camp of Captain Messec, a number exceeding the soldiers under his command.⁵⁴ After some delay Superintendent Henley granted permission to have the Indians removed to the Mendocino Reservation, which had been established by

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 256-257.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 262.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 264-271.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 262-263.

him in 1856, its headquarters being at Noyo River, about fifty miles south of Cape Mendocino.⁵⁵ In accordance with this a load of 121 Indians, mostly squaws and papooses, left Humboldt Bay for the Noyo River on the first of February.⁵⁶

Since the volunteers were anxious to return home as soon as possible, and it was felt that from the severe manner in which the Indians had been treated they might be willing to make peace if properly approached, Lieutenant Winslett was dispatched to Hoopa to enlist the services of the Indians of that valley in getting into communication with the hostile Redwoods. After repeated attempts and even some threats on the part of General Kibbe himself, he was able to secure their services.⁵⁷ A severe storm which raged during February proved a great aid to the whites, for the Indians were now unable to hunt in the higher regions and the volunteers held possession of the river valleys.

Late in February the Hoopa chiefs announced that the hostile Indians desired a council with the whites at Big Lagoon, about eight miles north of Trinidad. The meeting was held, but with indifferent success. Many of the Indians were willing to make peace but others showed little concern, and while they offered little resistance to being taken prisoner by the whites they were not willing to give themselves up. During the succeeding weeks the volunteers were very energetic, and soon the remaining Indians were gathered in, starved and worn by the severe storm and the hard campaign waged against them.⁵⁸

That the methods adopted by the troops in taking these prisoners were not always laudable is evidenced by the manner in which the band of Redwood Creek Indians, near the Albee place, were taken. These Indians were assembled, as they were informed, for a peaceful conference with the whites when suddenly they were surrounded and hastened to the coast as prisoners, an act which had much to do

⁵⁵ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1856, 245, 257-258, for the early report on the Reservation. At this time the exact boundaries were not determined. The Noyo River was both headquarters and southern boundary; its northern limit was variable, at one time including the coast to Bear River. *Infra*, 153.

⁵⁶ San Francisco, *Herald*, Feb. 10, 1859.

⁵⁷ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 271-273. This difficulty was increased by the influence of degenerate whites who sold arms to the Indians.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 273-275.

with the hatred this tribe later bore toward the white settlers.⁵⁹

On the twenty-third of March the *Fanny Major* sailed for the Noyo River with her second detachment of prisoners, which this time numbered 153.⁶⁰ With this the war came to a close. The volunteers were mustered out and in May were paid in full for their services.⁶¹

Trouble with the Coast Indians, 1858-1859. While this series of campaigns was being carried on with the mountain Indians, complaints were not lacking regarding the actions of the tribes nearer the coast. That this trouble was in large manner provoked by the actions of the whites is evident. Late in May, 1858, eight or ten men visited a rancheria on Eel River with the stated purpose of dispossessing the Indians of their guns. With little or no provocation they fired into the camp, killing two Indians and wounding others, an act which was strongly condemned by the other settlers, and warrants were at once issued for the arrest of the guilty parties. No further action was taken, however. About the same time two whites were murdered by Indians in the woods near Eureka and two Indians captured as suspects, but they were later released since there was no evidence against them.⁶²

While this state of affairs existed near Humboldt Bay, relations between the two races were even more strained in the Mattole Valley. In June a man named Thornton was murdered there and his body badly mutilated by the Mattole Indians.⁶³ The settlers here already felt aggrieved by the encroachments of the Mendocino Reservation upon their lands and were not in a spirit to overlook such an act as this. For two weeks a general war was waged against the Indians of the region and fifteen or twenty of their number killed.

As the natives were now ready to make peace a mass meeting of all the settlers was held on September 4 and

⁵⁹ Goddard, *Notes on the Chilula Indians of northwestern California*, 268; United States Court of Claims, *Minor vs. the United States*, 6-7.

⁶⁰ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 275, says it was March 17; but the San Francisco, *Herald* Mar. 26, 1859, gives the date here used.

⁶¹ San Francisco, *Herald*, May 16, 1859, gives the address of Kibbe; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 277-280.

⁶² *Humboldt Times*, June 5, 19, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 281-283; for additional references to mistreatment of the Indians see Loud, *Ethno-geography and archaeology of the Wiyot territory*, 323-329.

⁶³ *Humboldt Times*, June 19, 1858; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 285.

resolutions were drawn up setting forth the conditions of peace between the two races. The Indians were to use all diligence in securing the murderers of Thornton and bringing them to justice; they were not to set fire to the grass, nor drive away, steal, or kill cattle or other stock; they were not to enter the enclosures of the whites, nor to live on their claims without permission. On the other hand, the whites agreed to permit them to return to live in the valley, to collect wild food, and to fish and hunt; and agreed also to protect them from dangers and even from other hostile Indian tribes. Furthermore, no whites were to be allowed to mingle with the Indians in their rancherias or to interfere with their squaws and children.⁶⁴

This treaty was enacted in good faith by the settlers, and for a time gave respite from Indian troubles; had it been maintained, it would undoubtedly have done much to put an end to the misunderstanding and trouble. The degenerate whites who were so severely condemned in the treaty could not be kept from their baneful influence over the natives, however, and as a consequence ill feeling soon arose again.

Failure of the Federal Indian Administration, 1856-1859. As has been stated the nature of the administration of Indian affairs by the federal representatives in this region had not helped to inspire confidence on the part of the settlers. There were no less than three reservations within the limits of the region under consideration, but the fact that they were not proving successful in preventing Indian troubles was only too evident.⁶⁵ Agent Whipple and his successors had doubtless been faithful in their efforts to settle the Indians into peaceful pursuits on the Klamath Reservation, but the great number under their control made proper supervision extremely difficult.⁶⁶

The Mendocino Reservation, on the other hand, had few if any redeeming features. This reservation was established by Superintendent T. J. Henley during the year 1856, with

⁶⁴ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 286-288.

⁶⁵ These were the Klamath Reservation, established in 1855 (*ante*, 144); and the Mendocino and Round Valley reservations, established in 1856.

⁶⁶ Browne to Greenwood, Oct. 18, 1859, speaks of this reservation as the single exception of judicious management. *Report of the Secretary of the Interior communicating . . . the correspondence between the Indian office and the present superintendents and agents in California and J. Ross Browne, Esq., May 17, 1860 (Serial 688, Doc. 4), 15.*

headquarters at the Noyo River, in Mendocino County.⁶⁷ Little was said at that time regarding the limits of the reservation and the Indians around Cape Mendocino were known to the agent only through hearsay.⁶⁸ Early in the year 1857 Special Agent James Tobin visited the reservation and made a trip up the coast as far as Cape Mendocino, reporting favorably upon the condition of the country and stating that there were few settlers in the region.⁶⁹ Later in the year a military post, subsequently known as Fort Bragg, was established at the reservation, and according to the statement of the agent in charge, the territory of the reservation was extended along the coast as far north as Bear River in Humboldt County.⁷⁰ This naturally met with a strong protest from the settlers of the region, who pointed out that it took up one-half of the coast line of Humboldt County and claimed that it affected the lands of at least fifty or sixty settlers in the Bear and Mattole River valleys;⁷¹ they further claimed that the territory south of Shelter Cove was itself ample for all the Indians included within the reservation.⁷² Since these efforts were of no avail with the local agent, meetings of the citizens were held at Eureka and resolutions drafted protesting to Superintendent Henley and to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs against this action.⁷³ Even the state legislature took a fling at the Indian agent in a bill which proposed to set off the whole of Humboldt County as "an Indian reservation of the second class."⁷⁴

That this remonstrance of the Mattole settlers was not merely the partisan cry of the unscrupulous frontiersman is to be seen by the fact that the Indian Department itself now began to take cognizance of affairs in California, with the result that a thorough revision of the whole reservation

⁶⁷ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report, 1886*, 303-304.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, *Report, 1856*, 16-17, 245, 257-258.

⁶⁹ Tobin to Henley, Apr. 29, 1857. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report, 1857*; 403-406; *Ante*, 103-104.

⁷⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 5, 1857; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 461. This action was based upon sec. 9 of the appropriation act of Mar. 3, 1857, which provided that the President might extend the reservation along the coast to Cape Mendocino provided "such extension shall not interfere with the preemption claims of settlers." *Statutes at Large*, XI, 229.

⁷¹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 5, 1857. At this time Mad River marked the northern limit of Humboldt County. For an account of this dispute in connection with settlement see *ante*, 103-104.

⁷² *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 22, 1857.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, Oct. 3, 1857.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Aug. 22, 1857; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 463-464.

system was suggested. In the fall of 1858 Mr. G. Bailey, as a special agent of the Interior Department, made a tour of inspection of the California reservations. In a letter to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, dated November 4, 1858, he gives his opinion that

At present the reservations are simply government almshouses, where an inconsiderable number of Indians are insufficiently fed and scantily clothed, at an expense wholly disproportioned to the benefit conferred.⁷⁵

As described by him the Mendocino Reservation was very much smaller than it was according to any of the claims previously made, for, as stated in his report, it extended but ten miles along the coast north of the Noyo River. This great reduction in area was doubtless due to a change of mind on the part of Superintendent Henley when he saw the storm arising. As early as October, 1857, he had withdrawn the claims to the territory north of the Mattole River, and in his annual report for 1858 had suggested the probable necessity of additional reduction.⁷⁶

Reporting further in regard to the Mendocino Reservation, while admitting the value of its natural surroundings, Mr. Bailey declares:

Notwithstanding these natural resources the reservation has not thriven. There are but few Indians upon it (seven hundred and twenty-two, according to the sub-agent in charge), and the great majority of these could in no wise be distinguished from their wild brethren. The whole place has an effete, decayed look which is most disheartening. I saw it, it is true, in the most unfavorable season of the year, but there were unmistakable indications everywhere that whether considered as a means of civilization, or as purely eleemosynary, the system as tried here is a failure.

As result of this report the Indian Department entertained the charges of fraud and malfeasance made against Henley, and in the spring of 1859 he was removed from office, the position being given to J. Y. McDuffie.⁷⁷ Under the new administration the trouble with the settlers of the

⁷⁵ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1858:297-305.

⁷⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 10, 1857; Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1858:284-285.

⁷⁷ *Report of the Secretary of the Interior communicating . . . the correspondence between the Indian office and the present superintendents and agents in California and J. Ross Browne, Esq.*, May 17, 1860 (Serial 1033, Doc. 46), 2, 18. The date of McDuffie's commission was Apr. 4, 1859, but he did not succeed to office until June 3d.

region was easily adjusted and in December, 1859, the last claim to lands in the Mattole Valley was given up by the government officials, much to the relief of the residents of that section of the country.⁷⁸

⁷⁸ For further details regarding the Mattole Reservation affair see *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 20, Dec. 18 and 25, 1858; Apr. 23, May 28, Nov. 19, Dec. 3, 1859.

CHAPTER X

THREE YEARS OF INDIAN TROUBLES, 1860-1862

Trouble on Yager Creek. The volunteer forces under General Kibbe and Captain Messec had not yet been mustered out when Indian depredations began to be severely felt in the Yager Creek district, which lay immediately to the south of the region occupied by the Redwood and Mad River tribes. In March, 1859, Major Rains of Fort Humboldt had informed General Kibbe that the federal troops would be able to handle the situation and would be sent out as soon as needed clothing had arrived.¹ After some delay Captain Lovell with a detachment of troops was sent to the affected district, but not until serious damage had been done by the Indians, one of the settlers, Jas. C. Ellison, having been killed from ambush while pursuing a band of Indians whom he had caught killing his cattle. In the meantime the report of this occurrence had so aroused the people of Hydesville that a company of twenty-five men had been immediately organized and supplied with provisions for the campaign.² Their work was energetically done and many of the hostile bands were driven back. Meanwhile the regular troops became more active and, in addition to the company under Captain Lovell which was located on the Van Duzen River near the site of Fort Baker, other troops were placed on the Trinity trail at the Pardee place.³

With the coming of winter the Indians again became more daring and attacked the stock ranges, especially in the region between the Van Duzen and Mad rivers where it was estimated that in December not less than one hundred head of cattle had been killed within two months.⁴ Once again a volunteer company was organized and supplied with provisions by the settlers, who appealed to Major Rains for aid and to the governor to organize the men under the

¹ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 290-292.

² *Humboldt Times*, May 28, June 4, 11, 1859.

³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 17, 1859.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 17, 1859.

militia laws of the state. Reports from other parts of the region were not more reassuring, for it was learned that two men had been killed, supposedly by Indians, in the Mattole Valley;⁵ that the Redwood Indians were once more returning from the Mendocino Reservation;⁶ and a little later that the Indians had become especially bold in their attack upon cattle on Kneeland Prairie.⁷ The county judge consequently authorized the calling of another meeting of the citizens at Hydesville on February 4, for the purpose of forming a military company. Seaman Wright was chosen captain, and eleven other officers and fifty-five men were enrolled. Another urgent but ineffectual request that he issue the necessary commissions⁸ was then sent to the Governor.

The Massacre at Indian Island. It was under these circumstances that the most shameful act in the history of the settlement of the region occurred at Humboldt Bay. A large island lies in the bay opposite Eureka, known to the inhabitants as Gunther's or Indian Island. From the earliest times this had been occupied by peaceful Indians, whose greatest offense had been occasional pilfering from the whites. During the latter part of February of each year these Indians, together with their neighboring kinsmen of Eel and Mad rivers, celebrated a religious festival consisting of feasts and dancing. On the night of February 25, when the Indians were completely exhausted from their week's revelry and lay in sound sleep, a party of six or seven men armed with axes, knives, and clubs came suddenly upon them and killed or wounded all who came within their reach, including men, women, and children. Great excitement ensued when the people of Eureka heard what had taken place, and this became even more intense when it was learned that on the same night other Indian villages around the bay had been attacked in like manner. The exact number of those killed is not known; the *Humboldt Times* in reporting the affair places the number not far below

⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 24, 1859.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Oct. 15, 1859; Feb. 4, 1860; United States Court of Claims, *Minor vs. the United States*, 7-9.

⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 4, 1860; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 298.

⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 11, 25, 1860; for adverse criticism of this company see San Francisco, *Bulletin*, Mar. 13, Apr. 11, 1860.

150, but more conservative and probably more accurate reports say 40.⁹

That this action was the result of a well-laid plot is evident from the fact that three massacres occurred simultaneously. It was suggested at the time that the men responsible for the action were those who had so keenly felt the recent attacks of the Indians in the mountains around Hydesville and were led to believe that the Indians of the bay were giving them assistance.¹⁰ Beyond this suggestion the names of the perpetrators of the crime never became publicly known, and the grand jury, which met in April, failed to get any more definite information and limited its report to a condemnation of the deed.¹¹

Public opinion, in so far as it was expressed openly, strongly condemned the act. The *Humboldt Times* reproached the government officials for their failure to protect the lives and property of the settlers in the exposed districts, but at the same time strongly denounced those who had committed this act. It says:¹²

Smarting under these great and grievous wrongs, we are prepared to overlook much that would otherwise be unjustifiable, but we can not approve of the indiscriminate slaughter of helpless children and defenseless squaws. We can not conceive of any excuse for such killing unless it be accidental and will not suppose that any one in his sober moments will attempt to justify such a thing.

If in defense of your property and your all, it becomes necessary to break up the hiding places of your mountain enemies, so be it; but for heaven's sake, in doing this, do not forget to what race you belong.

At a meeting of the citizens of Hydesville, called to consider the Indian question, resolutions were adopted stating

⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 3, 1860; Gunther, who at that time was the owner of the island, in his *Autobiography*, MS., repeats the report given by others, but later says, probably more accurately, that there were forty killed on the island, that he himself counted sixteen bodies the next morning and that sixteen had been taken away by the Mad River Indians. Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 302-313, places the number at 250. His account is followed by Hittell, *California*, III, 920-922. For further accounts of the massacre see letters in the San Francisco, *Bulletin*, Feb. 28, Mar. 1, 13, 28, 30, May 24, 1860. Some of these are especially bitter against the people of Humboldt Bay, *ibid.*, Mar. 13, 30, Apr. 11, June 11, 1860.

¹⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 3, 1860, first made this suggestion. W. T. Olmstead, who was at that time a resident of Hydesville, confirms this and says he himself was asked to join the company but refused. San Francisco, *Bulletin*, Feb. 28, Mar. 1, 1860.

¹¹ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 312-313.

¹² *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 3, 1860.

that they "deeply regret the late unfortunate and indiscriminate destruction of Indian life in the county, and at the same time find it their bounden duty to express their indignation at the conduct of the government, which has been the whole cause of this said affair." As a safeguard against a repetition of the act it was recommended that Major Rains collect the valley Indians under the protection and supervision of the troops.¹³

Lack of Official Action. During the months following the massacre there was little thought given to anything in the region except Indian affairs. The people of Eel River once again were called upon to furnish supplies to the men under Captain Wright, for the governor had failed to call the company into the service of the state.¹⁴ Furthermore, in spite of the action of these men and the presence of the regular troops in the region, the Indians grew bolder in their attacks upon the property and lives of the settlers, and it was believed that the bay Indians were guilty of aiding the more hostile ones.

D. E. Buel, the agent at the Klamath Reservation, saw the necessity of action and expressed his willingness to assist in gathering the bay Indians together and to keep them upon his reservation. After much hesitation Major Rains consented to the removal of the Indians held by the military authorities at Fort Humboldt and agreed to use the soldiers in gathering up the others.¹⁵ As a result 315 Indians were taken to the Klamath Reservation.

Early in May the disappointing report was received that the Governor had not only refused to heed the request for volunteer troops, but had also failed to sign the bill providing remuneration for losses incurred during the earlier wars.¹⁶ This news, together with the constantly increasing losses in stock and other property, gave much fervor to the meeting called by the sheriff at Eureka, May 19, for the consideration of the Indian question. Preliminary meetings had been held in each precinct and one or more delegates elected to be present at the county convention. S. G.

¹³ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 17, 1860.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Mar. 10, 1860.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, 21, 1860; *San Francisco, Bulletin*, May 11, 1860; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 321-324.

¹⁶ *Humboldt Times*, May 5, 1860.

Whipple was chosen presiding officer, and after much discussion Colonel Hagans was appointed to present to the Governor a report as to the condition of affairs in the county, and to urge upon him the necessity of enlisting a volunteer force to give the needed protection, for they declared "the federal troops in our county, under the present management are a curse and not a benefit."¹⁷

The matter was thus presented to Governor Downey, who declared himself in favor of a volunteer force but feared that supplies could only be secured at ruinous rates in view of the opposition to the Indian campaigns as shown during the past winter.¹⁸ Notwithstanding the favorable promises made at this time no definite action was taken for the relief of the settlers.

The failure of the Governor to respond to the petition of the people of the district is explained in his annual message of January 7, 1861, in which he says:

It affords me infinite satisfaction to be able to state, that the troops have not been called out by the State for the suppression of Indian hostilities within our borders—hence, a very onerous tax upon the treasury has been avoided, and one, too, that for previous years has been keenly felt. It is true that representations for the necessity of calling out troops have been made me, but from the best information I could obtain from the United States Commander, whose duty it was to suppress disturbances of this character, I was satisfied that the representations so made were exaggerated.

Continuing he explains that he was assured by the "gallant officer" in charge of the federal troops on the coast that his forces were equal to any emergency; that, furthermore, he felt too many of the attacks upon the Indians were but "indiscriminate slaughter of defenceless women and children;" and that the real cause of the trouble lay with the national government in that it had failed to provide for the tribes, which when encroached upon by the whites were obliged to kill the cattle for food.¹⁹

In the meantime the attacks of the Indians had become so destructive that the stockmen around Yager Creek, Mad River and the Van Duzen were forced to desert that region

¹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, May 26, 1860; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 313-316.

¹⁸ *Humboldt Times*, June 2, 1860.

¹⁹ *Senate Journal*, 12th sess. (1861), 39-40.

and to drive their stock toward the coast. Even this did not secure full relief from attack for soon afterward several head of stock were killed on the Rainbow Ridge near the headwaters of the Bear River.²⁰ The denunciation of the military officials for their failure to handle the situation more efficiently became constantly more severe, with the result that there was little expression of regret when, in July, Major Rains was transferred to another post.²¹

During the latter half of 1860 there was little change in the general situation except that affairs became even more complicated. Cattle herded into the coast regions suffered from insufficient feed, while such as remained in the interior were constantly preyed upon by the hostile natives.²² In addition to this it was reported that the Indians who had been removed to the Klamath Reservation during the spring were now returning to their homes. Small bands had escaped during July and August, but by October the movement had become general.²³ These were as a rule peaceful Indians, but their return at a time like this was not looked upon with favor by the whites, especially since an effort had so recently been made to secure their removal. The Indians gave as their reason for leaving the reservation that they had been given an insufficient supply of food, a charge which upon investigation was found to be untrue.²⁴

Agent Buel expressed his willingness to aid in the return of the Indians to the reservation and devoted a week to the task. At the end of this time, however, he discontinued his efforts, declaring that instead of being assisted he was hindered in the work by the opposition of the white settlers.²⁵ Other complications prevented further effort to gather up the Indians. By a federal law of June 19, 1860, the whole administration of Indian affairs in California had been revised, a large number of the offices being abolished, and the state divided into a northern and southern district.²⁶ Major John A. Driehlebis was appointed agent of the northern district, with instruction to visit immediately each

²⁰ *Humboldt Times*, June 10, 16, 1860.

²¹ *Ibid.*, July 7, 1860.

²² *Ibid.*, July 28, Aug. 14, 1860.

²³ *Ibid.*, May 23, Aug. 18, Oct. 13, 20, 1860; San Francisco, *Bulletin*, Aug. 4, 26, Oct. 26, 1860; Jan. 17, 1861.

²⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 15, 1860; Jan. 5, 1861.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 20, 1860.

²⁶ *Statutes at Large*, XII, 57.

reservation within it, and to replace the agent of the reservation by a supervisor, a measure which was advised in the interest of the strictest economy.²⁷ In accordance with these instructions Major Drieblebis visited Humboldt in October, 1860, removed Colonel Buel from his position as agent of the Klamath Reservation, and placed G. W. Terrill in his stead as supervisor.²⁸

While these changes in administration were being made, the exodus of the Indians from the reservation went on unchecked. Once again a county convention was called to consider the Indian situation.²⁹ Delegates from all parts of the county met at Eureka on January 5, 1861, and, as on the previous occasion, drew up a set of resolutions reciting their grievances and asking for the removal of the Indians to the reservation. A copy of these resolutions was then sent to the supervisor of the Klamath Reservation, but beyond this nothing was accomplished.³⁰

Volunteer Guides. The situation confronting the settlers at the opening of the year 1861 was indeed a grave one, for the reports of attacks upon men and property were numerous and came from over a wide field, especially along the upper Eel River. Early in January the Sproule brothers nearly lost their lives in an attack by Indians;³¹ in the Ketinshou Valley, lying to the east of Eel River, the last remaining settler was driven out and his place robbed; while nearer at hand the place of Larrabee was attacked and his housekeeper murdered.³² Although a detachment of troops under Lieutenant Lynn had been ordered to the South Fork of Eel River as soon as the attack at Sproule's was known, they had been unable to do much on account of high water and a lack of knowledge of Indian fighting.³³

Once again an appeal was made to the Governor for assistance. The latter now took up the matter with General

²⁷ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1860: 230-232.

²⁸ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 327, 328.

²⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 22, 1860.

³⁰ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 335-337.

³¹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 19, 26, 1861; *The war of the rebellion: a compilation of the official records of the Union and Confederate armies*, Series I, Vol. L, part 1 (No. 105), p. 8, hereafter cited only as *Rebellion records*, No. 105. The latter gives more of the Indian side of the attack.

³² Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 338. Many other depredations are mentioned in *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 2, 23, Mar. 9, 1861; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 7, 10, condemns Larrabee very strongly.

³³ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 8-12, 451; *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 15, 1860; Jan. 12, 19, Feb. 2, Mar. 9, 1861; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 339.



A. S. Johnston, then commanding the Department of the Pacific, who replied that there was already three companies of regular troops, numbering about two hundred men, in the affected region, that these would be kept actively employed and that he hoped they would be sufficient as no more men were available.³⁴ In response to an urgent request that thirty men be enlisted from the region as volunteer guides, Johnston approved the plan and Governor Downey authorized the formation of such a company.³⁵ The men were mustered into service April 17, and through their skill and knowledge of the country were of much assistance to the regular troops.³⁶

Trouble in Hoopa Valley, 1861. Although the establishment of Fort Gaston in Hoopa Valley had had a beneficial effect in the maintenance of peace in that vicinity,³⁷ it seemed evident during April, 1861, that the Indians there were preparing to enter the war and to exterminate the small white population of that valley.³⁸ Captain Underwood, the commander of this fort, promptly demanded the surrender of all firearms, and placed his men in positions to compel obedience. At first many of the stronger rancherias refused to comply and took to the mountains. The forces of nature at this time favored the whites, however, for the rivers and mountain streams were swollen by continuous storms and were dangerous even for experienced canoemen; furthermore, to be driven from the river valleys meant the loss of the food supply.³⁹ Many of the Indians therefore surrendered their weapons. Others hastened off to join in the hostile raids, but were followed immediately by a detachment of troops.⁴⁰ On May 14 the latter engaged the Indians at Boulder Creek, near the Blue Slide of Mad River, killing fourteen and capturing about two thousand pounds of beef as well as other stolen property.⁴¹ The Indians there had been especially troublesome, and had shortly before this

³⁴ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 452-453, 457-458, 459.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 456, 457-458, 459. The desirability of these guides had been pointed out in the report of Capt. Collins, Mar. 23, *ibid.*, 6-8. *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 6, 1861.

³⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 20, 1861; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 343-344; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, p. 19.

³⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 30, 1861.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Apr. 13, 1861.

³⁹ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 466-467; *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 20, 1861; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 341-342.

⁴⁰ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 472-473.

⁴¹ *Humboldt Times*, May 18, 1861; Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, places the Blue Slide on the east slope of the Iaqua Buttes, across the river from Brehmers.

plundered the places of Brehmer and the Starrer brothers, driving off their cattle and destroying their property. From this time on the troops under Captain Underwood carried on an aggressive campaign.⁴²

Other troops had in like manner been sent out from Fort Humboldt by Captain Lovell to operate upon Larrabee Creek and Van Duzen River. By the middle of June they reported having killed 117 hostile Indians, without any casualties amongst their own number except three wounded.⁴³ Confidence in the ability of the troops was just being engendered in the hearts of the settlers when the period of enlistment of the volunteer guides came to an end, for they were mustered out of service by Captain Lovell on July 16.⁴⁴

The Humboldt Home Guards. That the efficiency of the recent campaign had rested upon the ability of the volunteer guides seems to have been recognized by the Indians as well as by the settlers, for within a week after the guides had been mustered out, a band of hostile Indians attacked Cooper's mill near Hydesville, murdering George Cooper and a domesticated Indian. This again aroused the people to action. A public meeting was held at Eureka and S. G. Whipple delegated to place before the Governor a set of resolutions which declared that the federal troops were inadequate to deal with the savages, whose attacks were constantly becoming more malignant, and urged upon him the enrollment of state troops.⁴⁵ At a subsequent meeting, held at Hydesville, \$1,400 was subscribed for defense against the Indians.⁴⁶

Whipple was successful in his mission. The Governor, after demanding "irrefragible evidence of continued depredations," and having been informed by General Sumner, the commander of the federal forces in California, that there were no more troops at his disposal, authorized the enlistment of a volunteer company, the Sixth Division of the California State Militia.⁴⁷ This company, known as the Humboldt Home Guards, was mustered into service on

⁴² *Humboldt Times*, June 1, 15, 1861.

⁴³ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 12, 17-21; *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 20, May 11, 18, June 1, 8, 15, 22, 1861.

⁴⁴ *Humboldt Times*, July 20, 1861; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 346-348.

⁴⁵ *Humboldt Times*, July 27, 1861; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 353-354.

⁴⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 3, 1861.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 26, 1861.

September 9 by James T. Ryan, who acted as its commander.⁴⁸ The company was divided into three nearly equal divisions and placed where protection seemed most needed. Lieutenant G. Wilkinson commanded a detachment at Neal's Ranch on the Van Duzen; Lieutenant John P. Warren, near the head of Grouse Creek; and Lieutenant James Brown, in the Mattole region.⁴⁹

In the meantime the regular troops were being stimulated to action. Adopting the suggestion made by Lieutenant Collins earlier in the spring, General Sumner ordered that a military post be established in the interior.⁵⁰ After some delay, incident to the disposal of the Indian prisoners taken in the earlier campaigns of Collins and Underwood,⁵¹ Captain Lovell with sixty of his men moved into the Indian country, taking up his position on the upper Eel River at a site thereafter known as Fort Seward.⁵²

Activity in the Indian Department. Even the federal Indian Department now seemed to take some notice of events in the Humboldt region. As just noted the troops had been detained at Fort Humboldt for some time pending the disposal of the Indian prisoners held there. In September the Supervisor of the Klamath Reservation finally announced his readiness to accept all Indians who might be sent to him, and they were shortly taken by boat to the Klamath River and placed upon the reservation.⁵³ Little has been said of the part taken in these hostilities by the officers of the Indian Department because of the fact that they seem to have attached little importance to the struggle between the two races. However, in his report for 1861, George M. Hanson, who had succeeded in May to the office of Superintending Indian Agent for the Northern District of California, mentions these conditions in the following language:⁵⁴

⁴⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 7, 28, 1861. At first this company consisted of fifty-five men, but later was increased to seventy-five, *ibid.*, Oct. 19, 1861.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1861. Neal's Ranch had recently been plundered by the Indians; this was probably the early site of Ft. Baker, as shown on the Doolittle map. O. W. Wise had been murdered in Mattole in August, *ibid.*, Aug. 17, 1861.

⁵⁰ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 558, 559; *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 24, 1861; earlier suggestions, *ibid.*, May 18.

⁵¹ *Humboldt Times*, June 6, Aug. 31, Sept. 14, 21, 1861; *Rebellion Records*, No. 105, p. 584.

⁵² *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 21, 1861. The name first appears in that paper Oct. 26, 1861. The site was selected and the fort established by Capt. Lovell in September, *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 633-634.

⁵³ *Humboldt Times*, July 1, Aug. 31, Sept. 14, 21, 1861.

⁵⁴ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1861:149.

In the frontier portions of Humboldt and Mendocino counties a band of desperate men have carried on a system of kidnapping for two years past: Indian children were seized and carried into the lower counties and sold into virtual slavery. These crimes against humanity so excited the Indians that they began to retaliate by killing the cattle of the whites. At once an order was issued to chastise the guilty. Under this indefinite order, a company of United States troops, attended by a considerable volunteer force, has been pursuing the poor creatures from one retreat to another. The kidnappers follow at the heels of the soldiers to seize the children when their parents are murdered and sell them to the best advantage. During my recent visit at Round Valley a hundred of the fugitive Indians came voluntarily into the reservation for protection.

In considering the charges made against the whites it must be noted that the agent's knowledge of the trouble in the Humboldt region was based entirely upon the opinions of others, except for what he had seen on a visit to the Round Valley Reservation, which was not itself within the affected region. On the other hand, it must be admitted that there was some basis for the charges made. The laws of the state permitted the indenture of Indians and Indian children, and quite naturally such a law was open to grave abuse.⁵⁵ Large numbers of Indians were held as domestic servants and farm hands near Humboldt Bay,⁵⁶ but little complaint was heard regarding the abuse of the privilege in that locality; while in the southern part of the county, nearer the region visited by the Indian agent, numerous complaints were made against men who procured Indian children for profit.⁵⁷

In consequence of Hanson's report Dr. Elijah White was appointed to examine into affairs on the Pacific Coast, and to act in cooperation with local agents in restoring "peace and harmony between the whites and Indians in northern California."⁵⁸ In October a letter was received from White requesting that hostilities be suspended until his arrival;⁵⁹ a request which was naturally complied with

⁵⁵ *Statutes of California*, 1860:196-197.

⁵⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 9, 1861. The county judge complains of the extra work in drawing up these indenture papers. A bundle of 105 may be seen in the archives of the County Recorder at Eureka. Coy, *Guide to the County Archives of California*, 74, 187-188.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 9, Mar. 9, Oct. 5, 12, 1861, Feb. 22, 1862; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 74, 494-495, 803, 834-835, 982; Coy, "Evidences of Slavery in California," in *Grizzly Bear Magazine*, October, 1916.

⁵⁸ Dole to White, Aug. 7, 1861, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1861:151-153.

⁵⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 19, 1861

neither by the Indians nor the whites, for it arrived at a time when the settlers, impatient on account of the inactivity of the Indian agent, had called a general meeting demanding that all Indians "pet and tame as well as wild" be taken to the reservation.⁶⁰ Finally in January, 1862, Indian Agent Hanson favored the region with his presence, but beyond providing for the further removal of Indians to the reservation nothing was accomplished.⁶¹

Campaign of the Humboldt Home Guards. During this time the Humboldt Home Guards were doing effective service in driving back the hostile bands, for, notwithstanding the increased fury of the onslaught of the Indians the position of the troops throughout the exposed region prevented any but isolated attacks.⁶² During the earlier months the dryness of the season and the prevalence of forest fires so hindered the activities of the Guards that it was the middle of November before they met the Indians in direct engagement. On the seventeenth of the month occurred the battle of Thief Camp. Lieutenant Warren with sixteen men attacked a large rancheria of Indians, who made a stubborn resistance. After a two hours' fight the ammunition of the troops was exhausted and they were forced to withdraw, one of their number, Chas. Heustis, having been killed, and six others wounded. It was estimated that about twenty Indians were killed. When the men returned to the attack the next day the rancheria was deserted. The Indians were pursued to another village, where an attack was made and fourteen of them killed.⁶³

With this engagement the three months' campaign of the Humboldt Home Guards came to an end. Since four companies of the Third Infantry had been sent to Humboldt in November it was thought by Governor Downey that the regular troops would be able to handle the situation.⁶⁴ This

⁶⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 19, Nov. 9, Dec. 21, 1861. The Mattole Indians had been sent to Mendocino earlier, *ibid.*, Sept. 7, 1861.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 28, 1861; Jan. 11, 1862.

⁶² In September the mail station at Spruce Grove (Harris) was attacked and partially destroyed by a large band of Indians, *ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1861. During October, Parker, a settler on Bear River, was killed, *ibid.*, October 26. In November Brehmer's Ranch was again attacked and John Stuart and the Lemke brothers were killed while hunting stock, *ibid.*, November 16. During December two men were murdered in Mattole by domesticated Indians, making a total of eleven men reported killed within the preceding five months, *ibid.*, Dec. 14, 1861.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Nov. 23, 30, 1861.

⁶⁴ Adjutant general of California, *Records of California men in the War of the Rebellion, 1861-1867*:505, 520; *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 7, 21, 1861.

decision on the part of the Governor was the result of much correspondence between him and General Wright, the new commander of the Department of the Pacific. The general announced his purpose to create a new military district in the northwestern portion of the state with headquarters at Fort Humboldt, which would be occupied by an officer of rank and several companies of soldiers.⁶⁵

Colonel Lippitt's Policy, January-March, 1862. On the ninth of January, 1862, Colonel J. J. Lippitt, the new commander, arrived at Fort Humboldt with two companies of the Second Infantry, California Volunteers.⁶⁶ This brought the number of men at Fort Humboldt up to about four hundred, and it was planned that other posts should be located immediately in the exposed districts. In accordance with this plan three new military posts were established: Fort Baker, at Neal's Ranch on the Van Duzen; Fort Lyons, at Brehmer's on Mad River; and Camp Anderson, near Minor's place on Redwood Creek.⁶⁷ Fort Seward, which had been established on upper Eel River during the previous year, was abandoned.⁶⁸

Colonel Lippitt's plans were elaborately drawn and comprehended among other things a tour of inspection throughout the territory under his command. Complaints were soon heard, however, that little or nothing was actually being done to protect the lives and property of the settlers. Furthermore, the orders given to the men appeared to the settlers to indicate a failure to comprehend the situation, for in spite of the hostility of the natives the troops were instructed "not to make war upon the Indians, nor to punish them for any murders or depredations hitherto committed, but to bring them in and place them permanently on some reservation;" which was to be accomplished "without bloodshed whenever it was possible to do so." They were expressly prohibited "from killing or wounding an Indian, unless in self-defense, in action, or by orders of a superior officer."⁶⁹

⁶⁵ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 754-756, 760, 771, 786. The regular troops were now being taken elsewhere for service in the Civil War, their place being taken by others. *Ibid.*, 645, 652, 664, 691, 693, 694; *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 12, 26, 1861; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 363-365.

⁶⁶ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 803-805; *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 11, 1862; Adjutant general, *California men in the War of the Rebellion*, 422; *Report*, 1863, 1864-1865; the last two give a record of the activities of the regiment and of each company in it.

⁶⁷ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 908, 912, 913.

⁶⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 15, Mar. 22, 1862.

⁶⁹ Various orders for March, 1862, in *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 916, 924.

Indian Attacks on Mad River, March, 1862. The policy adopted by Colonel Lippitt was based upon excellent humanitarian principles, but was effective neither in inspiring confidence among the settlers nor in allaying the hostility of the natives. During the winter months severe storms prevented much activity, but with March depredations once more became frequent and fired the people again to demand more vigorous action.⁷⁰ On March 22 a bold attack on Angel's Ranch, with the consequent narrow escape of George Zehnder and his family, the occupants of the place, revealed to the settlers the need of prompt action. A party of citizens set out from Arcata⁷¹ next day only to find the buildings in ruins. The families of Hanlon and Goodman, near neighbors, were moved; the latter to the residence of A. S. Bates on Mad River, about seven miles from Arcata, a place hitherto entirely free from hostile attacks.⁷² This action was taken none too soon, for within twenty-four hours the homes of both Hanlon and Goodman had been reduced to ashes, and, made bold by the apparent retreat of the whites, the savages even attacked the place of Bates. On March 26 while working near his home Bates was killed, and the other occupants barely escaped by fleeing to the river.

The murder of Bates so near the town of Arcata had a grave effect and a mass meeting of all the citizens was held to decide upon a course of action. A set of resolutions was drafted setting forth the damage wrought by the Indians and the consequent effect upon the settlement and closing with the urgent appeal that all the Indians, including those of Hoopa Valley, be removed to some distant reservation from which they could not so readily return as from those located near at hand.⁷³ Copies of the resolutions were then forwarded to the military commanders and to Governor Stanford. Colonel Lippitt had now come to realize the futility of his policy, and modified his orders, declaring that in the campaign against the Mad River Indians "no quarter will be given, except to the women and children."⁷⁴ Three detachments of troops had already been ordered to surround

⁷⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 8, Mar. 1, 15, 1862; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 369.

⁷¹ Formerly *Union*. The corporate name had been changed March, 1860. *Infra*, 199.

⁷² *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 29, 1862; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 369-371.

⁷³ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 5, 1862.

⁷⁴ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 955-956; *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 29, 1862.

and attack the Indians, but they had been unsuccessful in trapping the wily savages. Other troops were placed at Liscom Hill. But in spite of this action depredations continued.⁷⁵

Elsewhere than at Mad River hostile attacks were made. In addition to the usual loss of stock in that district a pack train was attacked at Oak Camp on April 6; Painter's house was burned, and other settlers fired upon on Kneeland Prairie and Redwood Creek; Regan, a settler near Angel's Ranch, was killed near his cabin. In other parts of the country similar incidents took place. Cooper's mill, which had been robbed in March was again attacked and a large amount of flour carried away, in spite of the fact that it was under guard of a company of soldiers.⁷⁶ Bear River and Mattole were also scenes of direct attacks by the Indians.⁷⁷ Notwithstanding considerable activity on the part of the troops⁷⁸ there were no decisive engagements, the only beneficial results being the capture of a large number of Indian prisoners, mostly women and children or members of the less hostile bands, which therefore did not materially diminish the strength of the hostile force. Captain Ketcham and Lieutenant Staples of Fort Baker were the most successful in this work although others added to the number of captives.⁷⁹

Attack on Daby's Ferry, June 6, 1862. Hardly had the intensity of the excitement following the murder of Bates begun to subside before the people of Arcata were again aroused by an even bolder attack. On the evening of June 6, a band of Indians well armed with rifles surrounded and attacked the home of Mr. Daby, near Arcata, at the crossing of Mad River known as Daby's Ferry. After withstanding the fire for some time it was decided that the only safety was in flight to the river. A part of the Indians who

⁷⁵ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 952, 953, 954, 955-956, 959, 972; *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 12, 1862, declares that a military force of one hundred men followed the Indians for three days after the murder of Bates, the only result being the death of two government mules.

⁷⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 29, Apr. 9, 1862.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Apr. 26, May 3, 1862.

⁷⁸ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 50-57, 992, 994, 1006-1007, 1020, 1021, 1053, 1054, 1076, 1108, 1117, 1133.

⁷⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 12, May 13, 24, 31, 1862; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 55-68. These were from Company A, Third Infantry. Adjutant general, *California men in the War of the Rebellion*, 524.

had remained across the river opened fire, and the fugitives were forced to land in a thicket a short distance down stream. During the fight two of the family and a hired man were killed and two others wounded, while Mrs. Daby herself very narrowly escaped.⁸⁰ The next morning Muhlberg, a German settler two miles below Daby's, observed a band of Indians near his place, and seeing that resistance would be useless made his escape. His house was robbed and burned. These two attacks, together with the report of an attack upon a pack train at Fawn Prairie and the wounding of Robert Neece, near Rohner's store, all caused much excitement among the white population.⁸¹

A meeting of the settlers was held in Eureka on June 9 and 10, to consider means of protection. At this meeting it was recommended that each community organize an independent volunteer company and that an appeal be made to the state for public arms. Walter Van Dyke was appointed to take the cause before the Governor and General Wright.⁸² The latter replied that Indian affairs in the Humboldt district had caused him much anxiety for several months; that he had full confidence in the ability of Colonel Lippitt, who had already collected nearly three hundred Indians at Fort Humboldt; and that although the colonel already had under him ten companies of infantry and one of cavalry—a force sufficiently ample to maintain peace—he would as soon as possible send three additional companies from Oregon.⁸³ General Kibbe, the adjutant general of the state, showed willingness on his part to grant a requisition for thirty rifles.

Indian Agent George M. Hanson. During these months George M. Hanson, the Indian Agent for the Northern District of California, took little part in any attempt to remedy the situation. His chief interest during the time seems rather to have been directed toward the establishment of a new reservation at Smith River, Del Norte County. In January, 1862, he had made a visit to the Klamath Reservation, which unfortunately had been practically destroyed by the winter

⁸⁰ *Humboldt Times*, June 7, 14, 28, 1862; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 67-68, 1120, 1123, 1126, 1127, 1132. In the latter records the name is given as Daley.

⁸¹ *Humboldt Times*, June 7, 1862.

⁸² Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 383-385.

⁸³ *Humboldt Times*, June 28, 1862; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 1134-1135, 1141-1144.

floods, and had made arrangements for the removal of the Indians to the new reservation.⁸⁴ In this visit he apparently acquired little if any information regarding the hostilities, for on March 31, just at the time the people of Arcata were aroused over the murder of Bates, he reported to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs that⁸⁵

Peace and quiet generally prevail among all the numerous tribes within the district. Occasionally a few cattle are killed by the starving Indians, whose lives, or others entirely innocent, pay the forfeit or damages.

When informed of the condition of affairs by S. G. Whipple, after the mass meeting of April 2, he replied that "he was truly pained to see an account of so much trouble" for he had hoped that Colonel Lippitt would succeed in collecting the Indians in a "peaceful manner," and without the "absolute necessity of resorting to bloodshed."⁸⁶ In May the agent once again favored the region with his presence, but as before his attention was directed almost solely to a visit to the Klamath Reservation, where after an eloquent speech to the Indians he sought to hold their regard by distributing brightly colored trinkets.⁸⁷

Indian Prisoners. During the remainder of the year Indian depredations continued although the regular military forces maintained an appearance of activity and were successful in capturing a large number of prisoners. After the attack on Daby's Ferry, Lieutenant Flynn engaged the upper Mad River Indians in an encounter, killing six of them.⁸⁸ At Fort Baker the troops seemed to meet with slight resistance in taking prisoners, one hundred and eighty having been reported as captured before August first,⁸⁹ while on the South Fork of Eel River the settlers induced about thirty-nine of the Indians to surrender.

There were now over four hundred Indians at Fort Humboldt, and the crowded conditions were not favorable to

⁸⁴ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1862:316-318. Records kept by Dr. Kirkpatrick at Fort Gaston, just above the reservation, show the extremely heavy rainfall of this winter. During November it amounted to 44.10 in., December 23.79, and January 30.95, a total for the three months of 98.84 inches. *Humboldt Times*, July 12, 1862.

⁸⁵ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1862:319.

⁸⁶ Hanson to Whipple, Apr. 21, 1862, in *Humboldt Times*, May 3, 1862.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, June 21, 1862; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 382-383.

⁸⁸ *Humboldt Times*, June 21, 1862.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, July 12, Aug. 2, 1862; Adjutant general of California, *Report*, 1864-1865; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 77-84, No. 106, p. 51.

their comfort or health.⁹⁰ The settlers greatly desired their removal to some distant reservation; but failing that, some better arrangement was immediately necessary. It was therefore decided to remove them to the peninsula, across from Bucksport, which during the month of August was converted into a temporary reservation. Captain Gibbs, with twenty men, was able to command the situation by placing sentries across the northern limit of the reserve, and allowing the Indians, who appeared more or less contented, to have considerable freedom over the southern end. This prison camp thus accommodated between eight and nine hundred Indians.⁹¹

In response to the request that the Indians be removed to a distant reservation, Agent George M. Hanson ordered their removal to the newly established reservation at Smith River, and they were transferred to Crescent City during September by the steamer *Panama*.⁹² This action did not please the Humboldt people or those of Del Norte, and protests were immediately sent to the Indian agent. The people of Del Norte naturally disliked the importation of so many Indians,⁹³ while the settlers of Humboldt believed their previous experience had shown that to place the Indians on a reservation so near at hand was almost useless, as they would soon return to their old haunts.⁹⁴ To his critics Hanson replied that this was the most distant point within his district and that lack of funds precluded any other action; that there was an abundance of food at this reservation, and that the natives previously taken there were very contented.⁹⁵ Major Curtis, with a small detachment of troops, was sent to do garrison duty at the reservation.⁹⁶

Indian Depredations, July-December, 1862. As previously stated, the presence of a great number of troops throughout the country had failed to prevent the Indians from destroying life and property. On July 2, Cuddeback, near Hydesville, was robbed and narrowly escaped death at

⁹⁰ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 50-51, the report shows 412 besides 157 at Ft. Baker. *Humboldt Times*, July 12, 1862.

⁹¹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 6, 1862.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Sept. 13, 1862; Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1862:308-313.

⁹³ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 1087-1088, 1092, 1093-1094, 1096; *Humboldt Times*, June 28, 1862.

⁹⁴ *Humboldt Times*, July 12, Sept. 13, 1862.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 4, 1862. In spite of this statement, however, reports of the return of the Indians were soon made, *ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1862.

⁹⁶ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 3, 12-13, 85, 124.

the hands of the Indians; and on the same day Morrison, on Freshwater Slough near Eureka, was also robbed.⁹⁷ On the tenth of the month, while attempting to pass over the trail from Eel River to Trinity, Lyons and Olmstead were attacked, the former being instantly killed, while Olmstead, badly wounded, escaped in an almost miraculous manner.⁹⁸ Sometime later three more men were killed at this same ford while driving hogs into Trinity County.⁹⁹ Mattole, Kneeland, and Eagle prairies all suffered attacks.¹⁰⁰ In the Redwood and Mad River sections conditions were equally bad, three men being killed on Whitney's ranch, four miles from Camp Anderson, during the latter part of July.¹⁰¹ In August the people of Trinidad were much frightened at the report of hostile Indians near Big Lagoon, and a tug boat was ordered from Eureka to assist in the removal of the families.¹⁰² After the attack on Whitney's place the military guards were withdrawn from other isolated farm houses, and Albee, a settler on Redwood Creek, was deprived of protection. While on a visit to his ranch in November he was murdered by the Indians.¹⁰³

The nature and extent of these depredations furnished argument to those who criticized the policy of Colonel Lippitt as being inefficient, for, it was claimed although his men had been able to gather up a large number of relatively peaceful Indians and had in a large degree established quiet in the Yager Creek and Eel River districts, they had been far from successful in the region around Mad River and Redwood Creek. The number of warlike Indians there was not large, but they were very hostile and did a great amount of damage.¹⁰⁴

The chief criticism directed against the military policy of Colonel Lippitt was that undue importance was attached to central official control; officers and garrisons were transferred or removed for no apparent cause, and lower officers

⁹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, July 12, 1862.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, July 12, 1862; Olmstead, *Statement*, MS.; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 388-389.

⁹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 11, 1862.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, July 26, 1862.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 2, 1862.

¹⁰² *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 64-65, No. 106, pp. 70, 75-76; *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 16, 1862.

¹⁰³ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 15, 1862.

¹⁰⁴ United States Court of Claims, *Minor vs. United States*. Minor says all was due to forty-four hostile Indians.

were strictly bound by close rules.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, his plan to concentrate his men, leaving the isolated settlements unguarded, also aroused the antagonism of the people thus abandoned. The unfortunate removal of troops from the Albee Ranch has been noted. In September similar orders were issued for the removal of the guards from Fort Lyons, at Brehmer's, and from Camp Anderson, at Minor's Ranch.¹⁰⁶ Since the latter was the halfway station between Arcata and Hoopa Valley the garrison was allowed to remain a few weeks longer.¹⁰⁷ Popular distrust of the commanders was accompanied by a feeling of contempt for the regular troops in general. The former were believed to have deserted the interests of the settlers, while the latter were accused of general inefficiency as well as killing the settlers' stock.¹⁰⁸

The demand for a volunteer force grew apace with the antagonism against the regular troops, for the popular feeling had always favored a volunteer guard. During the summer months, therefore, when the Indian hostilities along Mad River had become so startling, a volunteer company was formed at Arcata under the command of Captain G. W. Ousley.¹⁰⁹ In August they engaged the Indians at Light's Prairie, near Arcata. Six natives were killed and as many rifles recovered, one of which was identified as having belonged to the Whitney Ranch. James Black, one of the whites, was killed.¹¹⁰ The main band of Indians escaped and were traced to a new rendezvous on Little River, where they were again attacked and twenty-two of their number killed, one of the dead being a degenerate white who had been connected with the Indian depredations.¹¹¹

The success of the small campaign of the volunteers when compared with the inefficient operations of the regular troops did not decrease the ill feeling between the settlers and the troops. In November the citizens of Hydesville, following the example of Arcata, organized a military company for

¹⁰⁵ To cite an instance, at the time of the Albee murder, men were dispatched from Arcata, a distance of forty miles, when the troops at Fort Gaston were within half of the distance. *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 15, 1862. For Lippitt's statement, *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 58-59, 66.

¹⁰⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 6, 1862; *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 44-45.

¹⁰⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 25, 1862.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 25, Nov. 1, 1862. The latter refers to the loss of a pack-train of supplies and ammunition guarded by a force of twenty men.

¹⁰⁹ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 393-398.

¹¹⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 23, 1862.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 30, 1862.

the defense of that district.¹¹² The agitation for a change of policy in the conduct of the war became more insistent, and with it the demand that the volunteer companies be given the recognition of the state administration.¹¹³ There can be but little doubt that much of this adverse criticism of Colonel Lippitt was due rather to the impatience of the settlers than to his inefficiency as a military commander. Indian fighting required different methods from those employed in the regular army. It took some time for him to learn this. On the other hand, many of the settlers looked upon the federal troops somewhat as intruders, without whom they themselves, through volunteer forces, could solve the Indian problem in a thoroughly satisfactory manner. Under these conditions it was but natural that the accomplishments of the regular troops should be minimized while every success of the local volunteer companies should be well proclaimed.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, Nov. 29, 1862.

¹¹³ Col. Lippitt himself recognized that his campaigns had not been as successful as he had hoped. In a letter to the Asst. Adjutant general, Oct. 13, 1862, he speaks of the settlers being alarmed by the return of the Indians from Smith River and frankly declares:

"In short, the state of affairs is far worse than when we arrived. My previous reports will suffice, I think, to show that for this result neither I nor my officers and men are responsible. The truth is, two companies of State volunteers could be raised here, consisting of old hunters and mountaineers familiar with the habits of the Indians and accustomed to hunt them, that would be of far more service than a whole regiment . . . "

Rebellion records, No. 106, pp. 170, 221, No. 105, p. 188.

CHAPTER XI

THE CLOSE OF THE INDIAN WARS, 1863-1865

After three years of indecisive warfare between the Indians and the troops the country presented a desolate appearance, for notwithstanding the operations of the military officials the Indians had steadily forced the whites to withdraw from their frontier settlements and even to organize for the protection of their towns. A statement published by the citizens assembled at a mass meeting at Eureka, January 3, 1863, declared that during the previous eighteen months more than thirty settlers had lost their lives and a far greater number had been wounded; that at least fifty houses and barns had been burned, most of the latter being filled with harvested crops; that the grazing interests were being ruined, the loss of stock and other property amounting to one-half million dollars; and that the commerce with the mines had been almost wholly destroyed. It was recommended that the military authorities modify their policy in a manner suitable to the matter in hand; that a volunteer force of five hundred sharp-shooters be enlisted; that the Indians held as prisoners be sent to some distant reservation south of San Francisco; and that Indian Agent George M. Hanson be removed from office, since his policy indicated that he neither knew how nor cared to perform the duties of his office.¹ In a similar manner the grand jury of Klamath County in its report, made the same month, declared:

That the Jury find that the portion of Klamath County bordering upon Humboldt is entirely deserted; many of the houses and other improvements of our citizens in that region having been burned and laid waste, as well as many valuable lives sacrificed, by the brutal savages that infest that section.

The report then states that every appeal to the government or federal authorities for an active, efficient protection against the Indians had been of no avail; and that, while there had been several companies of United States troops in the region, the inefficiency and bad management on the part of

¹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 10, 1863.

the officers had rendered them "utterly worthless and useless as a protection against the Indians." It was therefore recommended that another effort be made to have the governor call out a sufficient military force from the citizens of the counties affected to put an end to these depredations.²

Governor Leland Stanford had become aroused to a sense of the difficulties existing in the northern counties. In his message of January 7, 1863, he stated that Indian disturbances, depredations, and murders had been of frequent occurrence throughout an extensive part of the state during the past year, and that while General Wright had responded with the federal troops to the extent of his ability, this protection usually came after the damage had been done. Without further recommendation as to the method to be employed he left the matter with the legislature, with the declaration:³

There should be absolute protection to our citizens from these repeated incursions of hostile Indians; and this, I believe, might be accomplished at far less expense than the General Government now incurs under its miserable management of Indian affairs in California.

The Mountaineer Battalion. Encouraged by the sentiment expressed by Governor Stanford in his message the members of the legislature representing these northern counties urged upon the governor and upon General Wright the necessity of calling out a sufficient force of volunteers for the protection of the exposed region. Both officials agreed to the plan, and on February 7, a proclamation was issued by the Governor calling for the enlistment of six companies of volunteer troops for the specific purpose of operating against the hostile Indians of the Humboldt district. The citizens of these counties were asked to organize the companies, to be known as the Mountaineer Battalion.⁴ Charles W. Long, of Eureka, and George W. Ousley, of Arcata, were immediately commissioned to organize companies A and B in Humboldt County. After some weeks their ranks were filled, and during April they were mustered into active service.⁵

² *Ibid.*, Jan. 17, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 401-402.

³ *Senate Journal*, 14th sess. (1863), p. 33; *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 24, 1863.

⁴ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 303-304, 305, 331-332, 342, 345; *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 7, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 402-405. Adjutant general, *California men in the War of the Rebellion*, 826-847, gives the full record of this battalion.

⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 14, 21, 28, Apr. 18, May 30, June 6, 1863.

Captain Long with Company A was located in the interior, at Fort Baker,⁶ while Captain Ousley with thirty-four men took up his headquarters first at Camp Curtis, near Daby's Ferry, moving soon afterward to Fawn Prairie on the Hoopa trail.⁷ This latter company was the first to engage hostile Indians. Near Angel's Ranch two men killed an Indian who carried a gun taken at the attack on Bates' Ranch.⁸

This prospect of protection had its effect upon the settlers, who now began to consider reoccupying their abandoned farms.⁹ The volunteer forces were considered competent to cope with the situation, thus relieving the regular troops, who were soon afterward withdrawn.¹⁰ On July 13, when it was considered that enough new troops had enrolled to take over the garrisons occupied by the troops of Colonel Lippitt's regiment, the full command of the Humboldt district was given over to Colonel S. G. Whipple of the Mountaineer Battalion.¹¹

The Hoopa Indian Troubles. While these changes had been taking place in the military forces of the whites the attacks of the Indians continued. The Hoopa tribe, which hitherto had taken but little active part in the struggle, now began to show unmistakable signs of hostility. Evidence of this occurred on the eleventh of April when, near Stone Lagoon, a small body of water near the mouth of Redwood Creek, a band of Indians who refused to cooperate in the hostile attacks upon the settlers were themselves suddenly and fiercely attacked by the Hoopa and Redwood Indians.¹² Other actions tended to indicate the hostile intentions of these tribes. Their supply of food stuffs was being gathered

⁶ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 219.

⁷ *Humboldt Times*, June 6, 1863.

⁸ *Ibid.*, May 23, 1863.

⁹ *Ibid.*, June 6, 1863. It must not be considered that the regular troops were inactive during these months, for at Fort Baker, Fort Seward, and Fort Bragg the commands had been active in looking for Indians. At Forts Gaston and Humboldt they had produced less definite results. *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 189-196, No. 106, pp. 357, 381, 411, 419.

¹⁰ Col. Lippitt had favored placing the Indian campaigns in the hands of volunteers in order that his men might be relieved for more regular military service. *Rebellion records*, No. 105, p. 188, No. 106, pp. 170, 221, 222. As soon as the companies of the new Battalion were filled the regular troops were ordered elsewhere, *ibid.*, No. 106, pp. 384, 467, 480, 498. Not all the regular troops were withdrawn at this time. Col. Lippitt was transferred to Benicia July 20, 1863. Company A left Fort Baker June 10; Company B left Fort Humboldt June 12; Company E, May 14; Company G, June 11; Company H, May 14; Company K, June 28, 1863. Company C remained till October 17, 1864; Company D left Fort Bragg Sept. 30, 1864. Adjutant general of California, *Report*, 1864-1865.

¹¹ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 509-510, 522. *Humboldt Times*, July 18, 1863.

¹² *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 25, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 406-407.



HOOPA INDIAN IN GALA DRESS
From Goddard, *Life and Culture of the Hupa*

in a regular manner; the stock on the deserted ranches was slaughtered by them and transported from place to place by means of pack trains which they had secured by their attacks.¹³ Furthermore, on Redwood Creek, near Albee's place, it was learned that they had even erected a log fort.¹⁴ A change of military commanders at Fort Gaston at that time—Captain Ousley and his company having been placed in charge of that post—had a very quieting effect upon the Indians of Hoopa Valley, who for several months at least showed no further indications of trouble.¹⁵

The Redwood Indian Troubles. Elsewhere conditions did not seem to improve. The reappearance of Indians from the Smith River Reservation, notwithstanding the repeated declaration of the Indian Agent that they remained there quiet and contented,¹⁶ increased the difficulty of the situation. Along Redwood Creek and the Bald Hills a band of hostile Indians did great damage. Early in the year the only house along Redwood Creek which had escaped former attacks, that of Isaac Minor, was destroyed.¹⁷ During June an attack was suddenly made upon the mill at Trinidad, the men's lodging house being looted and burned, as was also a place at the mouth of Little River. No lives were lost, but the inhabitants of Trinidad were greatly alarmed and sought measures to defend themselves against further attack. The Indians, however, seem to have secured all the plunder they could handle so did not renew the attack.¹⁸ During July a fierce battle occurred on Redwood Creek between these Indians and a small company of troops, which resulted in the death of six or more Indians and the wounding of several whites.¹⁹

Upon the third of August occurred one of the boldest attacks of the whole war. On the very outskirts of Arcata, Samuel Minor was suddenly attacked by Indians while working with his brother and Wesley Sumption. He died soon afterward. Not many Indians had taken part in this attack,

¹³ *Humboldt Times*, May 2, June 13, 1863; *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 419.

¹⁴ *Humboldt Times*, May 9, 16, June 13, 1863.

¹⁵ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 480; *Humboldt Times*, July 4, 1863.

¹⁶ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 170, 591-592, 603, 610; *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 11, 1862; Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1863:90, 94.

¹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 21, 1863; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 190, 192.

¹⁸ *Humboldt Times*, June 27, 1863; *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 489, 509, 569.

¹⁹ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 191, 197; *Humboldt Times*, July 18, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 415-417.

but its boldness struck terror to the hearts of the people, and guards were placed in the streets of Arcata and scouted the surrounding country daily.²⁰ Further events proved that this feeling of insecurity was justified, for within three weeks from the date of Minor's death Sumption was killed in a similar manner at nearly the same place.²¹

The Indian Troubles on the Trinity. While these things had been taking place in the Redwood Creek and Mad River regions there had also been much trouble on the Trinity, above Hoopa Valley. During May an attack was made by a band of thirty or forty Indians upon the store at Cedar Flat and other ranch houses in that immediate vicinity. Following this attack the settlements along the river as far as Taylor's Flat were deserted and in nearly every case destroyed.²² In September a further outbreak occurred, resulting in the death of two settlers; and soon afterward the startling news was received that M. S. Van Aernan, the mail carrier, and two escorts, while traveling between Hoopa Valley and Weaverville, had been attacked by Indians near Taylor's Flat. Van Aernan and one of the escorts were killed and the other fatally wounded.²³

In the meantime the situation in Hoopa Valley was becoming more difficult to handle, and the first week in September was one of intense excitement for the settlers there. An attempt on the part of the commander to apprehend two Indians implicated in a recent murder of whites caused the guilty ones to seek shelter under the protection of one of the most powerful bands in the valley. An attitude of defiance on the part of the Indians called for vigorous action by the troops. The rancheria was promptly surrounded and two or three Indians were killed while attempting to escape. Seeing that the military forces meant business the Indians, about one hundred and fifteen in number, surrendered.²⁴

²⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 8, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 418-419.

²¹ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 29, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 423.

²² *Humboldt Times*, May 23, 1863; *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 564-565; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 410-411. This was the territory of the Chimarikos.

²³ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 234, 235; No. 106, pp. 620, 621, 625-626; *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 26, Oct. 10, 1863; the escort was instantly killed, and Van Aernan was thought at first to have escaped. His body was later discovered and near it the note "Shot by Indians—back at the River—this morning. W. S. Van Aernan." Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 420-423.

²⁴ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 237-239; *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 12, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 424-425.

Trouble along the Trinity continued, and by the middle of October all that was left of the settlements between Hoopa Valley and Big Bar was destroyed.²⁵ During November Captain Miller while returning with sixteen men to Hoopa from Weaverville, came upon a band of Indians enjoying the results of a raid upon a herd of cattle. An attack was made and the Indians routed; but in a counter attack made soon afterward the troops were taken at a decided disadvantage and barely escaped loss of life, while their mules were stampeded and three of them, loaded with supplies, were captured by the Indians.²⁶

Captain Ousley with a company of men immediately set out from Fort Gaston in pursuit of the troublesome Indians, who were later recognized as South Fork and Redwood Indians, together with a few Hoopas. The band was soon located and an engagement of eight hours took place. Two of the whites were badly wounded. The Indians suffered more severely and were forced to give way. The captured pack mules were recovered.²⁷

Indian Troubles Along the Coast. During these months there had also been more or less trouble nearer the coast, in the region south of the Redwood Creek and Mad River country. Here, however, with the exception of the murder of James Knight on Elk River in July and that of McNutt on the Mattole in September,²⁸ the attacks had been confined almost exclusively to depredations upon stock or the robbing of isolated ranch houses.²⁹

The soldiers at Fort Baker reported that with the exception of a few camps near Pilot Creek³⁰ the Indians of that region did not appear active, but they were suspected of preparing to join the other tribes north of them in a more successful attack upon the whites.³¹

Rearrangement of Troops, September, 1863. The organization of the Mountaineer Battalion and the readjustment of positions following the withdrawal of the greater portion of

²⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 12, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 425-426.

²⁶ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 240-241; *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 21, 1863.

²⁷ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, p. 241; *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 28, 1863; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 426-427.

²⁸ *Humboldt Times*, July 11, Sept. 5, 12, 1863.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 7, July 12, etc., 1863.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, July 4, 1863.

³¹ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 417-418.

the regular military forces occupied several months, but by September Colonel Whipple had four full companies in service in the district and provision was made for the filling of the other two. Summer was regarded as the most difficult season to fight the Indians, so the men were placed in position to carry on a vigorous winter campaign.³² Fort Baker was abandoned for a new location near Iaqua, a position which could command the passes between Mad River and the Yager and Van Duzen. Company A with Captain Long was put in charge.³³ Captain Ousley with Company B was moved from Fort Gaston and placed on Redwood Creek near the former Camp Anderson, a position from which he could protect the Arcata-Hoopa trail as well as watch the Indians of that region. Captain Miller with Company C, which was made up largely of Trinity River men, was placed at Fort Gaston.³⁴ Other detachments were detailed for service in the Mattole Valley, on the Crescent City trail north of Trinidad,³⁵ and on Eel River at a new post, known as Camp Grant.³⁶

Condition of the Country, Fall of 1863. For some time it had been evident that a crisis in Indian affairs in this portion of the state was at hand. Notwithstanding the efforts of the new troops, the Indians wrought much damage to property as well as life during the year 1863. In the report of the assessor of Humboldt County, dated September 21, 1863, he says:³⁷

When to the ordinary difficulties incident to the office is added an unrelenting, devastating Indian war, that is carried to the very doors of our homes, I hope will be deemed a sufficient excuse for any shortcomings or imperfections which may appear in my report . . .

Our list of taxable property is over two hundred thousand dollars short of what it was last year. Our taxable inhabitants are one hundred short, and every department of our domestic relations have more or less been damaged by the same cause.

Since my last report whole neighborhoods in our county have been deserted; . . . Our grazing inter-

³² *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 12, 1863.

³³ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 608-609.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, No. 106, pp. 594-595, 610-611, 622.

³⁵ Camp Gilmore, located 3½ miles north of Trinidad, *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 651.

³⁶ An order was given Capt. Simpson October 8 to establish a camp on Eel River *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 642-643. This was named Camp Grant, *ibid.*, p. 655.

³⁷ California surveyor general, *Annual report*, 1863:127-129.

ests are entirely destroyed, and our agricultural interests very considerably impaired, from the fact that when a man sows he has no assurance that he will ever be permitted to reap his harvest. There is now in this county quite a number of fine fields of grain that can not be harvested with safety without an armed guard to protect the men while harvesting. Then our lumbering interests are impaired materially by the same cause. In fact, every department of society feels the oppression more or less.

That this picture was only too true is evident when the list of Indian depredations during the year are examined. The whites were preparing for an active campaign against the Indians, but, meanwhile the latter were dealing some heavy blows upon the settlers. In the issue for December 19, 1863, Austin Wiley, the editor of the *Humboldt Times*, declared:

The events that are now transpiring seem to afford some indication of an approaching crisis in our Indian affairs. The issue is about to be fairly and squarely presented both to the citizens and the military authorities whether this district which is second to none in California for grazing, agriculture and lumbering resources, but which is now depleted in population, and its property ruinously depreciated by this curse fastened upon it by former neglect, mismanagement and untoward sympathy, shall be abandoned altogether by the white man and given over to the remorseless red skin, or whether they shall be at once subdued by a force adequate to that purpose and the last one removed to parts so far remote as to render their return impossible, or, in the absence of that to provide one ourselves nearer home, but from which a return will be equally impossible.

The Hoopa Indians at War. The immediate cause for the editorial just quoted was the report received from Hoopa Valley. That a number of the Indians of that valley were working with the hostile bands had been suspected for some time, now there was no longer room for doubt.³⁸ Early in December it was learned that a band of Hoopa Indians had made an unsuccessful attempt to secure a supply of ammunition from friendly Indians near Sawyer's Bar.³⁹ Their object became manifest when the demand followed

³⁸ *Ante*, 164-165, 180; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 983, 1001, 1007, April, 1862; No. 106, pp. 67-68, 723-725.

³⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 12, 1863; *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 693-694.

that the white settlers and military forces leave the valley. Immediately the settlers gathered under the protection of the guns of the fort and reinforcements were called from Fort Humboldt.⁴⁰ That the Indians were prepared for a bitter fight soon became evident. The Hoopas had called the Klamath and Redwood Indians to their assistance and were ready for the attacks of the troops. Near Bald Mountain on Redwood Creek, about five miles east of Angel's Ranch, the scouts located a band of Indians strongly protected within an enclosure made by four well-constructed log houses surrounding a spring of water. The report was made at Fort Gaston and a company of men sent out to dislodge the natives. A fight of two hours revealed the futility of further action without reinforcements. Later in the day, December 25, Captain Ousley arrived with a howitzer and additional troops, and the following morning the attack was renewed, but without result before the ammunition of the howitzer had become entirely exhausted. During the night Colonel Whipple arrived with extra ammunition. Before morning, however, the Indians had made good their escape, much to the chagrin of the troops and the disgust of the settlers.⁴¹

In view of these disturbances Colonel Whipple adopted the policy of greatly strengthening the garrison at Fort Gaston. Captain Pico, of the First Regiment of Native California Cavalry, arrived at Fort Humboldt on January 5 with fifty-five men, and was immediately sent to Hoopa Valley, while Captain Martin of Company D increased the number of recruits in his company. This made a force of three hundred and fifty men at Fort Gaston.⁴² In spite of this large garrison, however, a band of Hoopas made a sudden attack upon the settlements of the South Fork of the Salmon River, doubtless for the purpose of securing ammunition and supplies. Two trading posts were robbed and destroyed, and several white men and Chinamen were killed or wounded. The leaders were recognized as Hoopa men who had previously been employed upon the ranches of the white settlers.

⁴⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 19, 1863. *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 701-702, 705, 707.

⁴¹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 2, 9, 16, 1864. There was much criticism and many charges of mismanagement made at the escape of such a large number of hostile Indians, but a letter from Capt. Ousley, whose loyalty was unquestioned, removed all feeling of blame. Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 429-432.

⁴² *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 23, Feb. 13, 1864; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 433.

A detachment of soldiers was immediately sent out to intercept the Indians on their return, but they were unsuccessful, as the wily natives evaded the troops and slipped unobserved back to their rancherias.⁴³

Colonel Whipple adopted a still more aggressive attitude and ordered that an attack be made upon the Senalton rancheria, which was the center of these disturbances. In spite of the secrecy and rapidity with which the order was carried out, the Indians were not caught unawares, for signal guns warned the rancheria of the movement of the troops in time for all the warriors to make their escape.⁴⁴ Some days later a soldier was shot from ambush at this village, and the rancheria itself was destroyed.⁴⁵ From this time on the troops were kept busy scouting for hostile natives, and plans were made for the reestablishment of a post on the Redwood.

Colonel Black. While these events were transpiring, Austin Wiley, the representative of Humboldt County in the assembly, was doing all in his power to secure reinforcements to the military forces of the district. Early in January, as previously noted, Captain Pico with a company of the First Native California Cavalry was sent to Humboldt.

Governor Low and General Wright both showed their concern in the matter and expressed a willingness to do what they could. On February 4, the latter wrote Wiley informing him that he had ordered Colonel H. M. Black of the Sixth Infantry California Volunteers to Fort Humboldt with two hundred and fifty men to "take the field and make a vigorous campaign and clean sweep of those rascally Indians." He made no complaint against Colonel Whipple, but placed Colonel Black in command in the district because he was known to be a man of much experience and energy. The new forces arrived at Fort Humboldt on the 17th of February.⁴⁶

⁴³ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 30, 1864; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 242-243; No. 106, p. 731.

⁴⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 6, 1864. The name is spelled variously, Ceonaltin, Seranaltin, and Senalton. The latter is preferred by Goddard.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 13, 1864. Neely, the Fort Gaston correspondent of the *Humboldt Times*, was strong in his belief that Senalton John, the leader of this band, was the one most responsible for the depredations at Bate's, Daby's, Muhlberg's, and Liscom Hill during the summer of 1863.

⁴⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 20, 1864; *Rebellion records*, No. 106, pp. 741, 742, 743, 752, 759. There were now sixteen companies of troops in the Humboldt Military District, *ibid.*, 772. These were companies C, E, and G of the Sixth Infantry. For the history of these troops see Adjutant general, *California men in the War of the Rebellion*, 720-723.

Indian Depredations Along the Coast. Within a few hours after the arrival of the troops at Fort Humboldt word was received of an Indian attack upon the place of J. M. Dyer near Jacoby Creek, a short distance from Arcata. The hired man and Mrs. Dyer escaped by flight, but the Indians pillaged and burned the house. The promptness with which a detachment of men was sent out by Colonel Black made a very favorable impression upon the people of the region.⁴⁷

Farther south there was also much trouble. Early in the fall of 1863 McNutt, a settler in the Mattole Valley, was shot by hostile Indians.⁴⁸ A detachment of troops under Lieutenant Frazier was then placed at Upper Mattole, but they were unable to prevent depredations in the lower valley, and in November the house of McGinnis in this latter district was destroyed.⁴⁹ In January the mail station at Blue Rock, near Eel River, was attacked by hostile Indians;⁵⁰ and early in February the ranch of Joseph Russ, on Bear River, was attacked and a large amount of clothing, bedding, and firearms secured.⁵¹

During the month of February Lieutenant Frazier located a rancheria in White Thorn Valley about twenty-five miles above Upper Mattole, and taking the Indians unawares, killed and captured twenty-one. These were supposed to be the Indians involved in the killing of McNutt.⁵² Notwithstanding this decisive action in the upper part of the Mattole region trouble still continued in Lower Mattole, for on February 23 Thomas Lambert and Pat Mackey were fired upon by a small band of Indians, Lambert being instantly killed.⁵³ Sometime later a mass meeting of the Mattole settlers was held and resolutions adopted asking for additional military protection. These declared that although the region had been prosperous and thriving two years before, it was fast being depopulated by reason of the destruction wrought by the Indians. M. J. Conklin carried

⁴⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 20, 1864; *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 759; No. 105, pp. 250-251.

⁴⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 5, 12, 1863.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 5, 1863.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 16, 1864.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 6, 1864.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, 1864.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Mar. 5, 1864.

the request to Colonel Black, who promised to send the needed troops at the earliest possible moment.⁵⁴

The Indians east of the bay, in the neighborhood of Kneeland Prairie and Yager Creek, also showed signs of much unrest during the spring of 1864. On the second of March a contest between a small company of men under Lieutenant Geer and an Indian band on the divide between Mad River and Redwood Creek proved indecisive, although one of the men who ventured too far from camp was killed and his body stripped of clothing and rifle.⁵⁵ In the middle of April the residence of Colonel Hagan on Eel River was attacked by a band of Indians, who took clothing, bedding, and fire arms.⁵⁶ Soon after this, while scouting for Indians, J. D. Barnes of Company B was mortally wounded near Boynton Prairie; and about the same time Mills of Company E was killed in a similar manner near Booth's Run on Lawrence Creek. Lieutenants Geer and Taylor were successful in finding the camp of the hostile band and killed six, taking four prisoners. Here they found the clothing of Mills and the booty taken from the Hagan Ranch.⁵⁷

Campaigns of Colonel Black, March-June, 1864. Although it might seem that the troops were meeting with but little success in preventing attacks upon the settlers, nevertheless, under the energetic leadership of Colonel Black, they were rapidly bringing the situation under control. An attack of a band of Hoopas upon the home of William Young, near Martin's Ferry on the Klamath River, caused Black to issue drastic orders against all Indian warriors taken in battle.⁵⁸ From the time he assumed command of the forces Colonel Black had shown himself a man of decision and action, and the men under him were kept busily engaged in their campaigns against the hostile natives. His policy is well set forth in a communication to Colonel Whipple, when he left the latter in charge of the forces at Fort Gaston. It reads:

He relies upon your activity, energy, and zeal to conduct a campaign which will be characterized by

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, May 21, 1864.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Mar. 5, 12, 1864.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 22, 1864.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, May 7, 1864; *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 264, 254, 275, 291-292.

⁵⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 2, 1864.

decisive measures, to keep up scouts all over the country to the eastern limits of this district, particularly along the Trinity River and its branches, believing the best protection that can be given to settlers and the country is by constant scouts in all directions, hunting the foe in his fastnesses and giving him no rest.⁵⁹

The results of this vigorous policy soon became apparent. Captain W. E. Hull, in command of Company D at Fort Bragg, was the first to strike a decisive blow, when on the North Fork of Eel River his men came upon a band of Indians, killing sixteen warriors and taking many more as prisoners. The news of this action not only aroused much enthusiasm among the people of the region but seems to have had a marked effect upon the Indians as well, for during the next few weeks large numbers of natives gave themselves up to Captain Hull.⁶⁰

Elsewhere similar success was reported. On the Trinity River, above Hoopa Valley, Captain A. Miller, of Company C, Mountaineers, made a campaign against the hostile bands during May and June. Although no decisive engagements were fought the activity of the men did much to weaken the hostile attitude of these natives.⁶¹ Camp Iaqua was the center of even greater military activity. From this point a large number of troops under Major T. F. Wright, Sixth California Infantry, covered the surrounding territory, one of the most successful being Lieutenant K. Geer, of Company A of the Mountaineer Battalion, who on May 23, in a skirmish with Indians on Grouse Creek, killed nine and captured four. These were the remainder of the party that had plundered the pack train and killed Mills earlier in the month. By the end of May they were able to report but few hostile Indians remaining in that territory.⁶²

Close of the Indian Wars. Since it was considered that the Indian troubles in this part of the state were nearly solved, Colonel Black was summoned east, leaving the command of the forces in this district once again in the hands of Colonel

⁵⁹ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 816.

⁶⁰ Capt. Hull's reports, *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 257-262. On May 27, he arrived at Fort Humboldt with 158 prisoners, of whom 66 were bucks, 68 squaws, and 24 children, *ibid.*, 249. For his action he was commended both by Col. Black and Brig. gen. Wright, *ibid.*, 262; *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 16, May 14, 28, 1864.

⁶¹ Miller's reports, *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 282-286; also No. 106, p. 843; *Humboldt Times*, May 21, June 4, 1864.

⁶² Reports of Wright, *Rebellion records*, No. 105, pp. 254-256; Geer, 290-295; others *ibid.*, 268-272, 274-276, 277-281; *Humboldt Times*, May 28, 1864.

S. G. Whipple.⁶³ Some changes were made in the position of troops, but the energetic campaign continued. One whole company was needed at Fort Humboldt to guard the large number of Indian prisoners gathered on the peninsula.⁶⁴ Lieutenant Geer with a detachment was sent to assist Lieutenant Frazier in putting down hostilities in the Mattole district. Early in August thirty of the Upper Mattole Indians were captured and brought to Fort Humboldt,⁶⁵ and in later engagements others were taken.⁶⁶ Elsewhere similar success was being achieved. Lieutenant Middleton near Hayfork, on the Trinity, brought in seventy-one prisoners early in October, and during the succeeding two months added fifty-eight more.⁶⁷ On the upper Eel River, at Camp Grant, Captain Simpson with Company E succeeded in capturing one hundred and sixty-six Indians, whom he placed upon the Round Valley Reservation.⁶⁸ These operations gradually put a stop to the Indian attacks, and in January, 1865, Lieutenant Middleton brought in twenty-three Trinity Indians whom he declared to be the last of the hostile bands in that region.⁶⁹

Hoopa Valley Reservation. In spite of the active military campaigns and the success in the southern and coast districts, the Indian wars were not to terminate without compromise on the part of the settlers. This was particularly true in the case of the Hoopa Indians and the tribes under their influence.

During the spring of 1864 the administration of Indian affairs was once again reorganized and with beneficial results. Indian Agent G. M. Hanson, whose inefficiency has earlier been noted, had been removed from office during the fall of 1863, and his place temporarily taken by Elijah Steele.⁷⁰ In April, 1864, the two Indian districts of California were combined under one superintendent, and the

⁶³ *Rebellion records*, No. 106, p. 881, for the special order dated June 30, 1864; Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 445-446.

⁶⁴ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1864:128. Wiley here states that there were three hundred Indians at Fort Humboldt on June 1; and five hundred a week later.

⁶⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 6, 1864.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 3, 17, 1864. The latter were probably the Indians responsible for the attacks on Eel River and Bear River Ridge. Just recently they had made a raid upon the stock of R. W. Williams of Bear River, and had destroyed the grain crop of Gould on Eagle Prairie, near Hydesville.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 8, Nov. 12, Dec. 17, 1864.

⁶⁸ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, p. 391; *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 22, 1864.

⁶⁹ *Rebellion records*, No. 105, p. 394-395; *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 14, 1865.

⁷⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 26, 1863. See report of Steele, Oct. 31, 1863, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1863:399-406.

position granted to Austin Wiley, formerly editor of the *Humboldt Times*. He was instructed to use his best efforts to remedy the hitherto "very defective" organization of Indian affairs within the state; to reduce the number of Indian reservations to four, using discretion in selecting them in order that the natives might be as free as possible from contact with the whites; and in all departments of the service to practice the most rigid economy.⁷¹

In considering in what manner the number of reservations might be decreased Superintendent Wiley favored the abandonment of Smith River and Mendocino reservations, concentrating the Indians at the Round Valley Reservation, which was the only one of the three suitable for this purpose. On the other hand, the large number of Indian prisoners at Fort Humboldt as well as the yet unsubdued tribes of Hoopa Valley and the Klamath River made it important that immediate action be taken to locate them at some place from which they could not readily return. The only place suitable to this purpose, in the opinion of Mr. Wiley, was on the military reservation at Catalina Island.⁷²

The Commissioner of Indian Affairs accepted the judgment of Wiley in regard to the abandonment of the reservations, but felt that an attempt to remove the Indian prisoners to southern California would be "very unwise on our part and exceedingly disastrous to the Indians;" furthermore, he was unable to see why there should be any great difficulty in locating them nearer at hand, for example, at Round Valley.⁷³

Having thus failed to secure the removal of the Indians to a distant reservation Superintendent Wiley turned to the consideration of other arrangements whereby the prisoners and hostile tribes would be sufficiently satisfied to maintain peace. The chief center of disturbance lay in the Hoopa Valley, where seventy-five warriors still retained their arms and refused to surrender until assured as to what action was to be taken. In July, Wiley made a trip to Hoopa Valley, where, on August 21, he concluded a treaty of peace with

⁷¹ Mix to Wiley, Apr. 26, 1864, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1864:123-124, 116. There were at this time five reservations within the state: Smith River; Mendocino; Round Valley (Nome Cult); Nome Lacke, in Tehama County; and Tule River in the San Joaquin Valley.

⁷² Reports of Wiley, June 1, 4, 30, 1864, in Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1864:125-131.

⁷³ Dole to Wiley, July 9, 1864. *Ibid.*, 1864:131-132.

the Indians by which they were to retain Hoopa Valley as their reservation.⁷⁴

By the terms of this treaty the whole of the Hoopa Valley, and a sufficient area of mountain land on either side of the river to enable the Indians to hunt for game and berries, was set aside for the sole use and benefit of the Hoopa, South Fork, Redwood, and Grouse Creek Indians. Furthermore, the women were to be given suitable instruction to enable them to make their own clothing and care for their children and household duties, while the men were to be trained in agricultural work; clothing and blankets were to be distributed to the natives annually; and a resident physician was to be located there to care for their health and comfort. Among other provisions it was stipulated that all white men were to be excluded from the reservation, except only those actually in the service of the government. The Indians agreed to obey the orders of the agent in charge, not to leave the reservation without a written pass, and to give over all firearms and ammunition to the agent, who was to pay for the latter and retain the former for use by the Indians for hunting purposes. All Indians who had taken part in the recent war were granted amnesty by the treaty.⁷⁵

This establishment of an Indian reservation in the very heart of the hostile country and so near the white settlements naturally aroused a storm of protest from the settlers in the whole region.⁷⁶ Mass meetings were held at Eureka, Mattole, and Orleans Bar, at which resolutions of protest

⁷⁴ The account given by Wiley of his reception at Hoopa gives a very graphic picture of the conditions as they were at that time. It reads: "I arrived there on the 10th ultimo, and found most of the hostile Indians in the valley, with their guns still in their hands, awaiting my arrival.

"They had been induced to come in by the officers commanding the district, under promise of protection until terms could be arranged; but so cunning were they, and so suspicious of white men, that they kept most of their guns hid, and were constantly on the alert, ready to break to the mountains in case any effort should be made to remove them to a reservation. They protest that they prefer death or starvation in the mountains to removal.

"I found among the leaders, and those having the most influence, young men, those that I had known as boys, most of whom have had more or less experience among white men as packers, herdsman, farmers, &c. They all speak English and are intelligent. They make dangerous enemies, but I have every reason to believe they will comply with every obligation they have subscribed to if I keep my faith with them. The old Indians used their influence against giving up guns, and protested that I would lie to them, as other agents had done; but the influence is now all in the hands of the younger or 'second crop' Indians. They are the ones to be conciliated; peace with them secures peace with all." Wiley to Dole, Aug. 29, 1864. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1864:134; *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 27, 1864.

⁷⁵ Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1864:135-136.

⁷⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 27, 1864, expresses strong disappointment, but explains to some extent the reasons for Wiley's action.

were adopted.⁷⁷ To these criticisms Wiley replied by setting forth his correspondence with Washington, explaining that no other plan was feasible.⁷⁸ In spite of this popular opinion gave way reluctantly.⁷⁹

Although it had been a fixed rule not to ratify formal treaties with the Indians of California, the importance of a definite agreement with these tribes was recognized by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, so the treaty as drawn up by Wiley was approved by his department, with instructions that three disinterested men be named to appraise the value of all improvements on the lands to be taken.⁸⁰ Wiley had previously suggested that he thought sixty thousand dollars would probably pay for the settlers' claims and improvements. Congress acted upon the advice and appropriated that amount,⁸¹ and the appraisers were able to adjust all claims within this limit.⁸² In September, 1866, the claims of the settlers were paid and the government obtained full title to the lands.⁸³

This treaty with the Hoopa Valley Indians, together with the effective military operations elsewhere, brought the campaigns of the Indian wars in the Humboldt Bay region to a close. During the early part of 1865 some scattered bands of Indians still remained unsubdued;⁸⁴ but it was nevertheless decided that the services of the Mountaineer Battalion were no longer required.⁸⁵ Consequently when in April a company of eighty-one regular troops arrived at Fort Humboldt the volunteers were mustered out of service.⁸⁶

Later Relations with the Indians, 1865-1876. The Indian affairs of this region during the remainder of this decade warrant little attention. On the whole the Hoopa Indians remained true to their treaty agreement; and the other

⁷⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 1, Nov. 12, 1864. Furthermore, Hoopa Valley was a beautiful little valley of about ten square miles, and had early been occupied by settlers on account of its rich agricultural lands.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 15, 1864.

⁷⁹ Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 473-477, reflects the feeling twenty years later.

⁸⁰ Dole to Wiley, Oct. 3, 1863. Commissioner of Indian Affairs, *Report*, 1864:137-139.

⁸¹ *Humboldt Times*, May 6, 1865.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1865, the amount was \$59,959.53.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1866.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 7, 14, Feb. 25, 1865.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Mar. 11, 25, 1865.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 29, May 13, 20, June 17, Sept. 19, 1865. Bledsoe, *Indian wars*, 450-455, gives a full account of the mustering out of these troops. The Indian prisoners at Fort Humboldt were removed to Round Valley in September, 1865, by Supt. Maltby, who succeeded Wiley. *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 30, 1865.

Indians, notwithstanding occasional attacks upon persons or property, were gradually brought under control.

On the Hoopa Reservation the policy of education and humane treatment as adopted by the administration bore fruit in a general spirit of contentment.⁸⁷ As an exception to this should be noted the murder of Agent Stockton and three others by an Indian desperado in April, 1867;⁸⁸ and the murder of Indian Pete, a friend of the whites, later in the year.⁸⁹ During the year 1868, Agent Pratt of the Hoopa Reservation was able to bring about a friendly feeling on the part of the Indians, and in May of that year about two hundred natives took part in a ceremony of burying the hatchet which symbolized their earlier ill will toward the whites.⁹⁰

Elsewhere matters had been progressing in a less satisfactory manner. During the year 1866, the military posts at Camp Iaqua and Camp Anderson had been abandoned as no longer necessary.⁹¹ While this action seemed proper at the time later events proved that the removal of the troops was somewhat premature. The Indians who had been placed upon the Smith River Reservation began to return to their old haunts, with the result that reports of depredations were not infrequent during the spring of 1867.⁹² In July, a settler was killed on the South Fork of Eel River, and a robbery at Cedar Flat on the Trinity was charged against the Indians.⁹³

During the summer and fall of 1868 the reports of numerous murders made it seem evident that additional troops would be necessary for an aggressive campaign during the winter.⁹⁴ An effort to get more troops from the government having failed a mass meeting was held at Eureka, November 30, where it was decided to solicit funds to maintain in the field Stephen Fleming and his men, who had done good service against the marauders in the Yager region. The plan seems

⁸⁷ *Humboldt Times*, July 22, 1865.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Apr. 13, 1867.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1867.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, May 23, 1868.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1866.

⁹² *Humboldt Times*, *Ibid.*, Mar. 30, 1867, reports an attack upon the Donnelly farm, and *ibid.*, Apr. 6, 13, 1867, reports others near Hydesville and Rohnerville.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, July 13, 20, 1867.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, July 12, 1868, trouble near Fort Baker and Pilot Creek; *ibid.*, Aug. 1, 1868, murder of Wm. Bryson near Klamath Bluff; *ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1868, Geo. Buckman on Mad River.

to have failed, at any rate Fleming's forces were soon disbanded.⁹⁵ Meanwhile the regular troops killed five Indians on Larrabee Creek, who were believed to be the last of the troublesome Indians.⁹⁶ This was a mistake, however, for within a few weeks another murder near the Redwood House, on Yager Creek, and in March still others at Cooper's Mills and Camp Grant, again aroused the people to action.⁹⁷

A small detachment of troops was sent into the Yager country from Fort Gaston early in March, but the Indians were sufficiently bold to make an attack upon the pack train of the soldiers.⁹⁸ Stephen Fleming was again called upon to organize his men, and a subscription of fifteen hundred dollars was quickly raised in Eureka and Eel River to cover the necessary expenses of the operations.⁹⁹ In a decisive encounter on upper Eel River the Indians were defeated and a large amount of ammunition secured.¹⁰⁰ This band proved to be the last of the hostile Indians, for with their defeat Indian troubles in the region virtually ceased.

Hoopa Reservation was now well established, and the Indians appeared contented; therefore, in accordance with the plan suggested by Superintendent Wiley, the Smith River Reservation was abandoned early in 1869 and the Indians there were removed to Hoopa;¹⁰¹ and later in the year the Mendocino Reservation was likewise thrown open to settlement.¹⁰² With the close of Indian troubles on Humboldt Bay the army post at Fort Humboldt had served its purpose; consequently, in the summer of 1870, it also was abandoned and its lands placed on sale.¹⁰³

⁹⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 28, Dec. 5, 12, 1868.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 9, 1869.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1869, R. B. Emery; *ibid.*, Mar. 13, 1869, Albert De Lasaux; *ibid.*, Apr. 3, 1869, Mrs. Bowman.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 20, 1869.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 3, 10, 1869.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, Apr. 17, 1869.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1869. These Indians numbered two hundred and fifty. *Statutes at Large*, XV, 221.

¹⁰² *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 23, 1869; *Statutes at Large*, XV, 198.

¹⁰³ *Humboldt Times*, June 25, Aug. 13, 1870.

CHAPTER XII

SETTLEMENT AND AGRICULTURE, 1860-1865

Effect of the Indian Wars. During the period when the Indians infested the region the advance of settlers into the unoccupied public lands was materially retarded. In the earlier decade expansion had been rapid, and large districts of arable and grazing lands had come into the possession of the white settlers. But the events narrated in the preceding chapters make it clear that the Indian wars had a very depressing effect upon the settlers. Large districts of valuable grazing and agricultural lands were deserted, the stock and improvements being in many cases left to be destroyed by the hostile red man.

The ranges on Yager Creek were those most seriously affected during the earlier years of the war, with the result that a large part of the stock was removed to the coast region near Bear and Mattole rivers. These valleys became overstocked and likewise were infested by hostile bands. Later in the war even greater havoc was wrought in the Redwood Creek and Mad River district by the Indians of that part of the country, and the settlers were forced to seek the protection of the more populous communities around the bay.

For those who desire statistical evidence the annual reports of the county assessor yield the most reliable information. From these it is seen that the total assessed valuation of Humboldt County in 1860 was \$1,366,361. From that year on there was a steady decline in the total valuation of the county until 1864, when the amount was \$1,105,075, a loss during those years of \$261,286, or nearly 20 per cent. It was not until 1865 that the valuation once again reached the amount attained in 1860.¹ While the statistics indicate a dark picture for these years, fortunately they do not tell the whole story; for, while many valuable ranches had been abandoned to the destroying hands of the savages and vast areas of grazing lands had been deserted by the stockmen, yet the greatest troubles naturally occurred in the

¹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1860-1865.

less settled districts and the centers of population were still able to continue their usual occupations. Furthermore, a closer study of all the available statistics shows that in spite of these disturbing factors the number of acres of land enclosed, as well as the number of acres cultivated, with some slight variations, increased steadily.²

Development of Towns and Settlements, 1860-1865. Just as the thickly settled agricultural districts were less disturbed by Indian attacks than were the grazing regions so also was this the case with the more populous towns and settlements. Certain of these towns, especially Arcata and Trinidad, were at times disturbed by real or imaginary hostile bands, but otherwise the effect upon the towns was indirect, such as that caused by the loss of trade or expense in life and money due to the conduct of the campaigns.

Eureka. Eureka, which had become the chief town on Humboldt Bay, was reincorporated by an act passed April 9, 1859.³ The industrial life of the place was thriving, and there was much activity in building of homes and other improvements.⁴ The act granting to the mill owners the right to the lands along the water front led to the construction of wharves along the bay,⁵ while the city itself took up the improvement of its principal streets, opening E Street out as far as Eighth in 1861,⁶ and extending J Street to Eleventh

² Statistical tables in California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1860-1865; Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865. The figures are as follows:

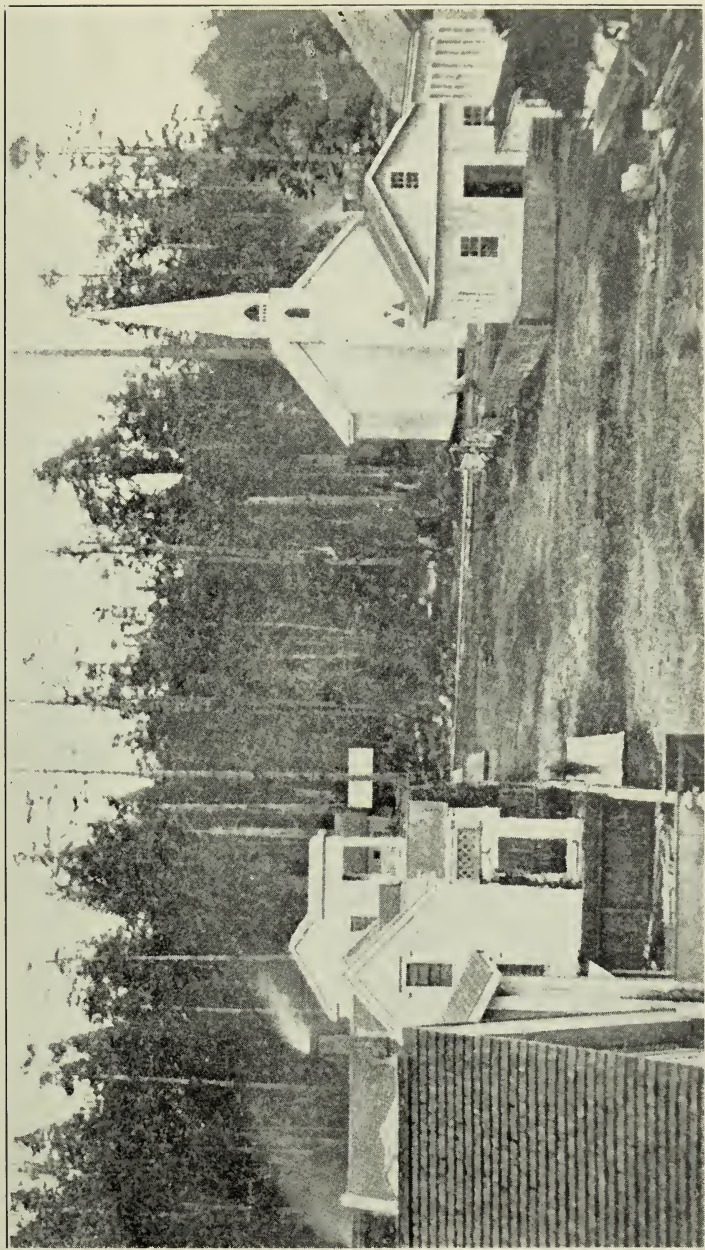
1859-60 acres enclosed 10,975; acres cultivated 3,547;
1860-61 acres enclosed 15,250; acres cultivated 4,534;
1861-62 acres enclosed 15,120; acres cultivated 8,558;
1862-63 acres enclosed 15,036; acres cultivated 4,419;
1863-64 acres enclosed 24,052; acres cultivated 7,078;
1864-65 acres enclosed 22,261; acres cultivated 9,060.

³ *Statutes of California*, 1859: 192-198; *Humboldt Times*, May 28, 1859.

⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 5, 19, 1859. For the benefit of an eastern inquirer the *Times* goes into detail regarding the things of which Eureka could boast. These are enumerated as follows: The county seat, land office, six steam saw mills and one flour mill, six stores, four hotels and several private boarding houses, five saloons, two drug stores, two shoe shops, two blacksmiths, two livery stables, one wagon factory, two butcher shops, a saddlery shop, one tailor, one paint shop, one tannery, one barber, a dozen carpenters, Daguerrian rooms, a surveyor and civil engineer, four lawyers, two doctors, four federal officers, two preachers, and the *Humboldt Times*.

⁵ This act passed in 1857 gave to the city of Eureka the lands along the water front upon the express condition that they should be sold in convenient quantities to the "present mill owners" and other occupants at a price not exceeding one dollar a front foot. *Statutes of California*, 1857: 76. *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 6, 1858. During the year 1859 John Vance built upon the water lot next above the city wharf, followed by a wharf by J. W. Dyer at the foot of A Street. *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 17, 1859, Feb. 25, 1860.

⁶ *Humboldt Times*, June 30, 1860; Sept. 21, 1861.



THE EUREKA OF YESTERDAY—G STREET, FROM THIRD TO FOURTH, 1864

Street, the southern boundary of the city, in 1863.⁷ The funds for these municipal improvements were obtained to a large extent through the sale of the town lots granted to the city by the act of April 27, 1855.⁸ During the year 1861 the Myrtle Grove Cemetery was purchased,⁹ and in 1864 the first volunteer fire company was organized.¹⁰ At the close of the wars much energy and thrift was shown in the various enterprises of the town, especially in the construction of new buildings, among these being a new academy, a fire engine building, an Odd Fellows Hall, and the Mammoth Stables.¹¹

Arcata. By an act of the legislature dated March 20, 1860, the corporate name of Union was changed to "Arcata;"¹² and soon afterward the name of the post office was likewise changed.¹³ The friends of the new name claimed that it was of Indian origin signifying "Union," but others declared it to be less dignified. In spite of some opposition the new name rapidly came into common use.¹⁴ Arcata felt the effect of the Indian wars more than any of the other bay towns, for the hostility of the Redwood and Mad River tribes often brought the scenes of bloodshed dangerously near, the brick store of A. Jacoby being more than once used as a place of refuge for the women and children of the place.¹⁵

The leadership among the towns of Humboldt Bay held by Arcata during the earlier years had been due in a large measure, as already stated, to its proximity to the mines.¹⁶ This natural advantage had enabled her to outstrip the rival towns in the profitable trade with that region. During the summer of 1858 this trade suffered a temporary depression, caused by the sudden exodus of the mining population to the Fraser River and the trouble between the whites and the Redwood Indians. These difficulties were only temporary, and trade with the mines was again recovering its normal

⁷ *Ibid.*, Dec. 19, 1863.

⁸ *Ante*, 63 n. 76; *Humboldt Times*, June 23, 1860.

⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 30, 1861.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, May 21, Sept. 3, 1864.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1865.

¹² *Statutes of California*, 1860: 109.

¹³ *Humboldt Times*, June 23, 1860.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 24, 1860. The name "Arcata" was first suggested by the editor of the *Times*, Jan. 20, 1855.

¹⁵ *Ante*, 148.

¹⁶ *Ante*, 59 *et seq.*

place when the later Indian wars broke out, with most disastrous results.¹⁷ Trade was maintained to a slight degree during these wars, but it was not profitable.¹⁸

Other Towns. Trinidad, the pioneer town in the region, still continued its existence but chiefly as a lumber port. Its location upon the ocean admitted of visits, of more or less regularity, by the Oregon steamers, and in 1862 a collector of customs was appointed for the port.¹⁹

Of the two other towns located upon Humboldt Bay during 1850 one had long since ceased to exist and the other was of little importance. Humboldt City was short-lived,²⁰ and Bucksport, now overshadowed by Eureka, maintained her existence only through the presence of the military post at Fort Humboldt.²¹ At the southern end of the bay, however, other towns, Hookton and Myers Landing, were coming into prominence as shipping points between the bay and the Eel River Valley.²²

Agricultural Settlements. To the south of Humboldt Bay the valley of Eel River offered the greatest inducement to the settler and despite the Indian hostilities developed into a thickly settled agricultural community, most of the present day towns tracing their origin to this period or earlier. Hydesville suffered most of all from these attacks and maintained an active part in the Indian campaigns. Nearer the coast these disturbances were less acute. Ferndale, which had its beginning during the spring of 1860,²³ was now the center of the Salt River district, while Rohnerville, on the north side of the river, had by 1865 become a place of some size and importance.²⁴

South of Eel River the development of the Bear and Mattole river valleys steadily continued despite the depredations of the Indians, which were keenly felt during the early years of the wars. In 1863 a colony of Morrisites, a branch of the Mormon faith, settled on Bear River,²⁵ and

¹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, July 2, 1859.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, July 2, 1859; June 1, 1861; Aug. 16, 1862.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 9, 1862, R. J. Parker being named.

²⁰ *Ante*, 54-56.

²¹ Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865, describes Bucksport as "nearly washed away and deserted."

²² *Ante*, 132; *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 3, 1864.

²³ *Ante*, 102.

²⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 23, 1865.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1863.

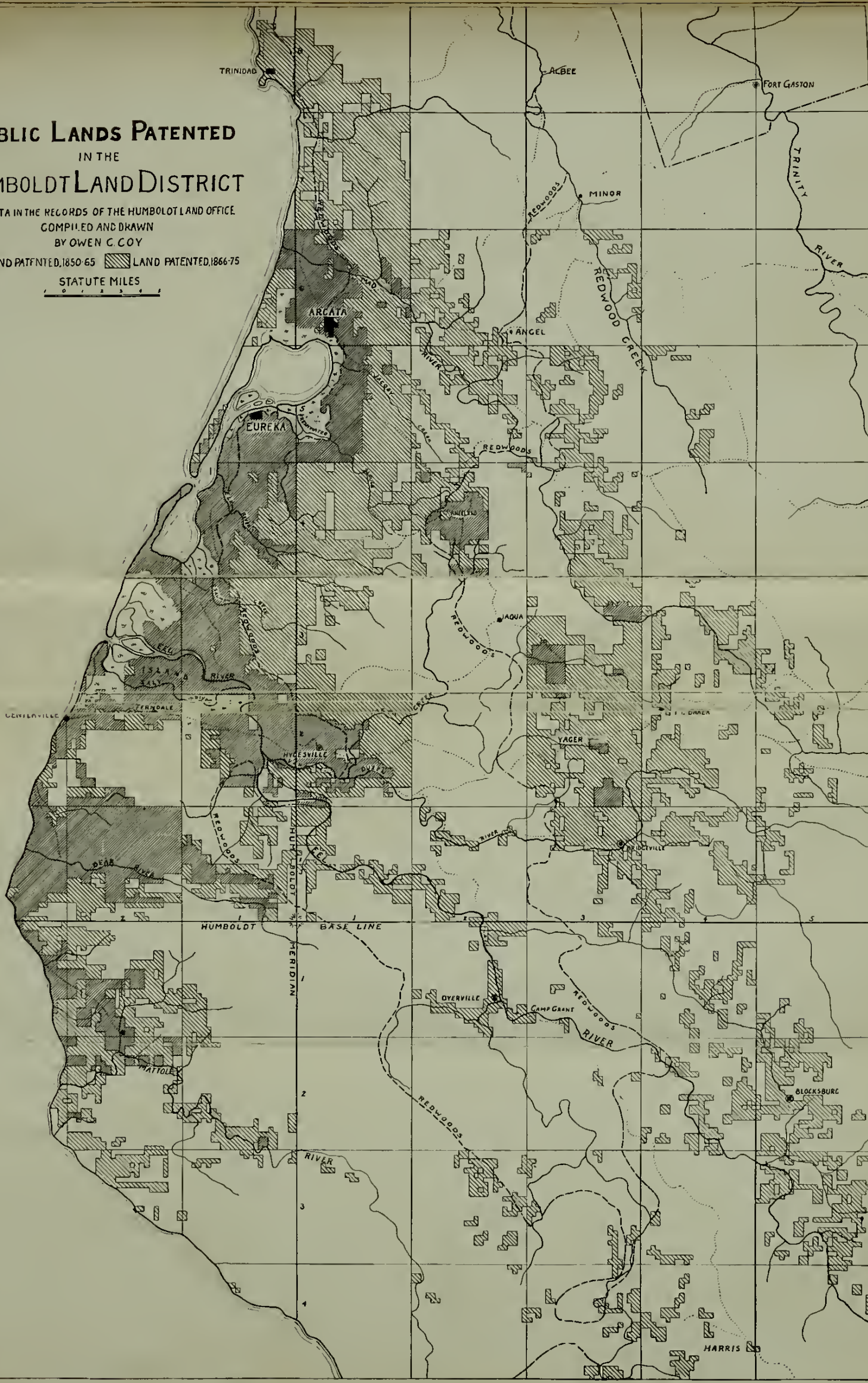
PUBLIC LANDS PATENTED IN THE HUMBOLDT LAND DISTRICT

FROM DATA IN THE RECORDS OF THE HUMBOLDT LAND OFFICE
COMPILED AND DRAWN
BY OWEN C. COY

LAND PATENTED, 1850-65 LAND PATENTED, 1866-75

STATUTE MILES

0 1 2 3 4



during the later years, especially after the beginning of the oil excitement, immigration into this region was rapid.

Number and Distribution of Population. From the federal census of 1860 and other sources of information some idea of the population of the region may be obtained. The statistics for 1860 show that the total white population of Humboldt County then numbered 2498 persons, distributed among the townships as follows: Eureka 581; Arcata 524; Eel River 388; Pacific 319; Bucksport 270; Mattole 259; and Table Bluff 157.²⁶ A study of the school census reports shows that during the half decade the school population steadily increased, there being 502 children of school age reported in 1860; 700 in 1863; and 929 in 1865.²⁷

Public Land Policy, 1860-1865. That there had been an increase in the amount of lands enclosed and cultivated during the years between 1860 and 1865 despite the Indian hostilities was doubtless due in large measure to new features in the public land system.

Homestead Act of 1862. The one important change in the federal land policy during these years was the adoption of the Homestead Act. For a number of years there had been a demand for a more liberal policy in disposing of the public domain than that of cash sale or the preemption privilege; in fact, it was urged that Congress should donate to each head of a family a portion of the public lands if it were desired for a home. After several failures to enact the law it was finally passed by Congress and approved by President Lincoln on May 20, 1862, and became effective January 1, 1863.²⁸

The main features of the act provided that any citizen who was the head of a family or over twenty-one years of age might acquire for his "exclusive use and benefit" a quarter-section of any public land subject to sale under the preemption law at \$1.25 per acre, the chief condition being that the land was to be used for "actual settlement and cultivation" by the applicant and "not either directly nor indirectly for the use or benefit of any other person or persons whomsoever." The only money payment required at the time the

²⁶ United States, *Eighth census, 1860, Population* (Serial 1202), 29.

²⁷ Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Report, 1864-1865*: 308. For an analysis of the elements of the population, *ante*, 107 *et seq.*

²⁸ Donaldson, *Public domain*, 332-356, gives a good account of this law and its history.

land was entered was a fee of ten dollars. The title to the land did not, however, pass to the settler until the expiration of five years from the date of entry. Two witnesses then affirmed that the original applicant or his heirs had "resided upon or cultivated" the land for a period of five years and had otherwise fulfilled the terms of the law. When all the conditions had been complied with the full title to the land was given over to the applicant on payment of the required fees. The democratic spirit of the act was shown not only in the provision whereby the lands were granted to the actual settler as a gift, but in another section as well, where it was further provided that,

No lands acquired under the provisions of this act shall in any event become liable to the satisfaction of any debt or debts contracted prior to the issuing of the patent therefor.²⁹

From the adoption of the act down to 1865 the homestead entries made in the State of California numbered 1,116, and included 170,031.57 acres; while in the Humboldt Land district, in spite of the Indian hostilities, 4,773.60 acres were entered.³⁰

Agricultural College Lands. The same session of Congress which passed the Homestead Act also authorized a grant of land to each state for the support of colleges to promote the study of agriculture and the mechanical sciences, each state to receive 30,000 acres of land for each representative in Congress.³¹ Wherever there were unoccupied public lands within a state, as was the case in California, the agricultural college lands were to be selected from these; in other cases the states issued scrip which authorized location upon any available land in the public domain.

State Lands Administration, 1860-1867. In recognition of the congressional grant for agricultural colleges the State of California passed a law providing for the sale of these lands, and at the same time took advantage of the occasion to make a general revision of the state land system.³² These newly acquired lands, which in California amounted to 150,000

²⁹ *Statutes at Large*, XII, 392-393.

³⁰ Donaldson, *Public domain*, 351; General Land Office, *Annual reports*, 1863: 53; 1864: 33, 39; 1865: 49, 55; 1866: 57.

³¹ *Statutes at Large*, XII, 503.

³² *Statutes of California*, 1863: 591-601.

acres, together with the remainder of the state school lands yet unsold, were placed on sale at \$1.25 per acre. Payment in gold or silver coin was required, but if desired it could be paid in easy installments.³³ Swamp and overflowed lands as well as tide and marsh lands were to be sold at one dollar per acre, but sales were restricted to resident citizens over twenty-one years of age, not more than six hundred and forty acres being allowed to any one person. Thereafter the location of all state lands, excepting by the school land warrants already issued, was restricted to those lands already surveyed by the proper federal officials, a provision which was necessary because the federal land officers refused to recognize the right of the state to sell any land before it had been surveyed.

Although the legislature had hoped by this act to find a ready sale for the lands at its disposal the various restrictions imposed resulted in practically removing these lands from the market. In the case of the agricultural college lands the states were free to make selections only from those lands that remained unsold after having been offered for public sale at \$1.25 per acre. Since these same lands could be purchased from the federal government at the same price as demanded by the state, and payments in the former case could be made in legal tender notes whereas the state required gold or silver coin, there would naturally be no demand for these lands under the state law. Furthermore, other restrictions withheld from the state much of the land granted under these acts: the Spanish and Mexican grants and mineral lands, comprising much of the land most desired, were not included in the lands granted, while the rugged nature of the country prevented the federal surveys from keeping pace with the advance of settlement. It is therefore natural that the state officials should have sought from the federal administration more favorable terms whereby the state might profit by the gift.³⁴

Dispute Between Federal and State Land Officers. The difficulties involved in the sale of agricultural college lands were far less serious than many of the problems connected with the sale of the other lands granted to the state. The

³³ Twenty per cent within fifty days; the remainder, bearing interest at 10 per cent, could be paid at the convenience of the purchaser.

³⁴ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1864-1865: 91-100; 1865-1867, 11.

legislature had in earlier years passed laws providing for the disposal of these lands, and had actually sold a large quantity of them in a manner more liberal than the congressional grant justified. There was a long continued dispute between the state and federal land officers regarding the administration of the laws. The chief points at issue were in relation to the school lands and the swamp and overflowed lands.

As noted in a previous chapter the state school lands had been obtained through two federal grants.³⁵ One of these donated five hundred thousand acres for internal improvements but was devoted to the public schools by a section of the state constitution; by the other grant the state was given for its schools the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections in each congressional township. Under a system of sale of warrants, which could be located upon any "unappropriated public land" within the state, nearly one-half of the five hundred thousand acres was disposed of in a very short time. Since a large number of these warrants were placed upon unsurveyed land, the general land office refused to accept them, and the legislature was required to limit their location to lands already surveyed.³⁶ Until April, 1864, the federal courts had sustained the state's right to make selections upon any of the lands, but at that time it was ruled that location could be made only upon surveyed lands. This resulted in the possibility of much confusion of titles for those who had already taken up this land.³⁷

Difficulty arose also in the case of the sixteenth and thirty-sixth township sections. These sections were granted to the state, but the federal government reserved such parts of these lands as might already be occupied by settlers, or included in private claims, or required for public uses. In lieu of such reservations by the government the states might select other lands. Since the law making this grant to the state also extended the preemption privilege in California to include unsurveyed as well as surveyed land, it was considered just that the state should also have the right to

³⁵ Chapter VI, *ante* 78 *et seq.*

³⁶ *Statutes of California*, 1858: 248 *et seq.* Subsequent to the writing of this dissertation Dr. Joseph Ellison has written upon this subject in his *California and the Nation*, 25-53. Dr. Ellison is more critical of the California officials than the author believes justified. The task presented difficulties which allowed for wide differences in opinion between equally honest officials.

³⁷ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1865-1867, 5-8.

claim these school sections, whenever they could be determined, even if the lands had not yet been surveyed by the government engineers. Consequently an act was passed April 22, 1861, authorizing the agents of the state to include these lands in their sales.³⁸ These favorable terms gave the purchaser an opportunity to buy the lands before the surrounding sections had been opened to public sale at the federal land offices and led to an unprecedented demand for them. Before November, 1863, there had been 327,928.60 acres sold under this act. The Commissioner of the General Land Office, however, firmly refused to admit the right of the state to sell any land before it had been properly surveyed, and, furthermore, refused to permit any selection in lieu of reserved lands in unsurveyed sections or for land covered by Mexican grants.

In view of these conditions the sale of these lands was restricted by an act passed by the legislature April 1, 1864.³⁹ Notwithstanding that the earlier court decision had favored the right of the state to give title to these lands, the U. S. Supreme Court in January, 1865, decided adversely, thus placing all those who held title from the state in a very unsafe position.⁴⁰

Another question over which controversy arose related to the sale of the swamp and overflowed lands. In an earlier chapter the main features of this matter have been considered.⁴¹ Sales under the various acts passed from 1855 to 1866 amounted to nearly one million acres, yet during that time the General Land Office failed to recognize the title of the state to any but a very small portion of these lands.⁴²

The reasons for this extended controversy become apparent when the situation in California is considered. In the first place because of the great area and peculiar topography of California the work of the United States surveyors proceeded slowly and at great expense. The General Land Office logically held that the sixteenth and thirty-sixth township sections and the swamp and overflowed lands could not be determined officially until these lands had been surveyed

³⁸ *Statutes of California*, 1861: 218-221.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 1863-1864: 301.

⁴⁰ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1865-1867: 8-10.

⁴¹ *Ante*, 92 *et seq.*

⁴² California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1865-1867: 10-11.

and reported upon by the authorized agents. On the other hand, the rapid immigration into the state caused its lands to be taken up in an unprecedented manner, a condition which was recognized by the preemption law of 1853, allowing settlement on lands in California in advance of the public surveys. The state officials, therefore, quite plausibly argued that unless they were permitted to claim their sections from the available vacant lands, even if unsurveyed, the state would be deprived of its full benefit of the grant. The problem was complicated by the Spanish and Mexican land claims, which included the greater portion of the most desirable agricultural lands of the state, and by the reservation from sale of large areas containing mineral deposits, regions which were the chief centers of the mining population. The federal officers held that lands within these two classes were exempt from the grant allowing the state the sixteenth and thirty-sixth township sections for school purposes, and consequently refused to sanction any claims made by the state to such lands; the state officials, on the other hand, were insistent that since these regions were the most populous areas of the state and consequently made demands upon its school funds they especially should be included if the spirit of the law were maintained. In reference to the swamp and overflowed lands the chief difficulty arose through the peculiar nature of the wet and dry season in California; lands which were very properly classed as high and dry during the summer and fall, when the United States surveys were usually made, were during the winter and spring entirely covered with water and were therefore unfit for cultivation. These lands were claimed and in many cases sold by the state as swamp and overflowed lands, only to be rejected by the General Land Office.

Efforts at adjustment were begun as soon as the difficulties became apparent. In 1859 Surveyor general Higley visited Washington regarding the question of swamp and overflowed lands, but was unable to effect an agreement. In May, 1861, the matter of these lands was placed in the hands of a Board of Swamp Land Commissioners, who were to determine accurately the nature of the lands and to provide for their reclamation.⁴³ Under the direction of this board many seg-

⁴³ *Statutes of California*, 1861: 355-361. Act of May 13, 1861.

regation surveys were made in several of the counties in which there were large areas of swamp land and affidavits from residents and settlers of these regions were also secured as proof. These maps and affidavits were forwarded to Washington, but after much delay they were returned on account of some technicality.

In 1862, when the difficulties regarding the location of the school lands became manifest, William H. Parks was sent to Washington as a commissioner to adjust the differences. He took with him all necessary documents, and according to his report made an earnest effort to secure a settlement, but failed, owing, as he says, to the "peculiar views of the Commissioner."⁴⁴ Numerous other attempts were then made by the congressional representatives from California, and the controversy thus carried on at short range became more heated.⁴⁵ Finally, during the spring of 1866, J. F. Houghton, Surveyor general of California, was granted a leave of absence and made a visit to Washington in an endeavor to secure an adjustment. The Commissioner of the Land Office, after several interviews, was prevailed upon to agree to a bill favorable to the California claims. This bill, which became a law July 23, 1866, finally settled the many vexatious problems regarding land administration in California.

The main results of this legislation are set forth in the first section of the act, which, while protecting all persons who might have acquired adverse title to these lands from the United States prior to the passage of this act, declared:⁴⁶

That in all cases where the State of California has heretofore made selections of any portion of the public domain in part satisfaction of any grant made to said State by any Act of Congress, and has disposed of the same to purchasers in good faith under her laws, the lands so selected shall be, and hereby are, confirmed to said State.

The other provisions were as follows: That where sales had previously been made of unsurveyed lands, if the boundaries were plainly marked they should have the same force and

⁴⁴ *Report of Hon. William H. Parks, as land commissioner to visit the city of Washington* (Jan. 13, 1863), 44.

⁴⁵ For a time two of the members from California most interested in the dispute suspended communication with the Commission of the General Land Office and demanded his dismissal. California Surveyor general, *Report, 1865-1867*: 13.

⁴⁶ *Statutes at Large*, XIV, 218-221. Act of July 23, 1866.

be subject to the same conditions as claims under the pre-emption law; that all swamp and overflowed lands should be segregated within a year if already surveyed, or within one year after being surveyed, and in case of dispute regarding the swampy character of the lands testimony should be taken as to its condition in September, 1850, the date of the grant; and that the state should be allowed to select other lands in lieu of the school sections covered by Spanish or Mexican grants. Thus it will be seen that in this legislation the state had secured a distinct triumph in that all of its titles, whether of surveyed or unsurveyed lands, were confirmed, and that the swamp and overflowed lands were to be determined promptly and their character ascertained through the testimony of the oldest residents rather than on the opinion of the United States surveyors.

Live Stock Industry. Having considered the more general phases in regard to settlement upon the public lands, let us turn to an examination of the various lines of activity taken up by these settlers. Since the stock industry was that most directly affected by the Indian hostilities it may well receive first consideration. In an earlier chapter it was shown that this business had developed during the years preceding the Indian troubles until great cattle ranges extended along the southern coast district and throughout the open country across the redwood belt, the chief centers being the region of the Bear and Mattole rivers, the Yager Creek country, and in the Bald Hills along Redwood Creek and upper Mad River.⁴⁷

According to available statistics there were in 1860 in Humboldt County 19,205 head of cattle, 9080 of these being stock and beef cattle, 4845 cows, 4511 calves, and 769 oxen.⁴⁸ As a result of the Indian hostilities of 1860-61 the cattle owners were forced to abandon many good feeding grounds, but in spite of this discouragement the industry grew rapidly, the year 1861 being one of the most successful in the early history of this business. Statistics for 1861 show that there had been during the year an increase of nearly 7500 head, the total number being 26,678, divided as follows:

⁴⁷ Chapter VII, *ante*, 114 *et seq.*

⁴⁸ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1860; *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 18, 1860.

11,306 stock and beef cattle; 7376 cows; 7161 calves; and 835 oxen.⁴⁹

Cattle Shipments, 1860-1861. The success of the live stock industry during these years made it highly desirable that trade with San Francisco be developed. In March, 1860, Captain Morgan, of the bark *Hartford*, announced his intention of taking a cargo of beef cattle to San Francisco. That this new enterprise would be of benefit to the local cattle industry was at once recognized, for according to the *Humboldt Times* the home market was "entirely inadequate" and cattle had "ceased to be a cash article at almost any price in large amounts."⁵⁰ During the month of April the first cargo, comprising about one hundred head, was taken by Captain Morgan from the Bucksport wharf.⁵¹ The next shipment, consisting of about thirty head, was taken by the steamer *Cortez* in May.⁵² These cattle, being of superior quality, commanded a good price in the San Francisco market, and attracted the attention of the leading stock dealers, who sent a representative to Humboldt to make purchases of cattle.⁵³ This trade continued strong during the year 1861,⁵⁴ but complaints began to be made that the quality of cattle shipped was not so good as it should be, and that while the heavy demand resulted in a good price only the shipping of the best grade of cattle would insure the shippers against loss.⁵⁵ A movement had already been started among the stockmen to improve the quality of their cattle. In July, 1860, two fine Durham bulls had been imported by Dr. Jonathan Clark and H. H. Buhne. One of them, only a two-year-old, was valued at \$1,000 and came from the Atlantic states.⁵⁶ During the following year other thoroughbred stock was imported, one Durham bull being brought by S. Jewett from New York at a stated cost of \$2,000.⁵⁷

⁴⁹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1861.

⁵⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 31, 1860.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 21, 1860. The cattle were lassoed, swung on board, and there made fast.

⁵² *Ibid.*, May 5, 1860. These were shipped by A. S. Robbins.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Nov. 24, 1860, one of the firm of Miller & Hull.

⁵⁴ Several loads of cattle were taken by the *Columbia* early in the year, *ibid.*, Jan. 19, Feb. 2, Mar. 2, 1861. During October, 52 head of cattle and 318 hogs were shipped, *ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1861.

⁵⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 2, Mar. 23, 1861.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, July 7, 1860. Walker of Eel River also imported blooded stock, *ibid.*, Oct. 27, 1860.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Apr. 20, 1861.

Live Stock Losses of 1862-1863. The winter of 1861-62 was extremely severe upon the cattle and stock industry in this portion of the state. During the fall the hostility of the Indians had forced the stockmen to drive their cattle to the ranges nearer the settlements, and the food supply there was soon exhausted. The winter was one of the most severe known in the history of the region, and floods and cold storms wrought havoc in the herds. In February the *Humboldt Times* expressed the fear that half of the cattle and the same proportion of horses and mules would perish. In Mattole Valley alone three hundred and forty head of cattle were reported to have been lost. Later reports were more reassuring. The cattle began to recover from the winter's storms,⁵⁸ but the Indian depredations were now more keenly felt than before, and the losses caused by these attacks were heavy. The county assessor in his report for 1862 writes:⁵⁹

Humboldt County may be strictly called an agricultural county, from the fact that the Indians have driven the citizens entirely from the grazing portions of the county, and where last year twenty-six thousand head of cattle were feeding on the most luxurious grass the State affords, now scarce seventeen thousand can be found; showing a loss of over nine thousand head in one year, besides the increase.

The situation here complained of continued for two more years, the number of cattle constantly decreasing, there being but 16,282 head in 1863 and 13,549 in 1864. As might be expected the greatest decline was in the number of beef cattle, for although these numbered 11,306 head in 1861 there were but 3730 in 1862. They did not materially increase until the year 1865.⁶⁰

As the Indian troubles abated cattle business responded to the improved conditions. As early as June, 1863, there was talk of restocking the ranges, but the season was dry, especially in Mattole, and it was necessary to seek more favorable locations.⁶¹ The year 1864, notwithstanding the reports of scarcity of food elsewhere throughout the state, was not a bad season in the Humboldt region, and the stock

⁵⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 8, Mar. 8, May 17, 1862.

⁵⁹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1862: 113.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, *passim*; figures for 1864 from Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865.

⁶¹ *Humboldt Times*, June 6, Sept. 5, 1863.

increased rapidly, so that the year 1865 showed 15,858 head in that county, of which 8549 head were stock and beef cattle.⁶²

The statistics of the dairy products denote similar changes. During the year 1860-61 there were produced in Humboldt County 70,170 pounds of butter and 45,510 pounds of cheese. During the following years these products declined rapidly, until in 1862-63 there was only about one-fifth of this amount produced. The later years once again showed an increase, but the figures are not so high as those of 1861.⁶³

Live Stock Other Than Cattle. While attention has thus far been given entirely to cattle raising, other kinds of live stock were also being raised. In some parts of the region the raising of hogs was an important business. Of these there were 8194 in 1860, and 8343 in 1861 besides some 2000 that had been slaughtered during the year. After this year the number declined until 1865, when there were 5795.⁶⁴ The sheep and wool industry did not gain importance until the year 1865, the number before that date remaining practically stationary at 500. The attention given to horse breeding⁶⁵ was inconsiderable, and need not be studied. The numbers of horses did not vary much, although they indicate a gradual increase. There were 1638 head in the county in 1860, 2166 in 1864, and 4202 in 1865. The number of mules was about five hundred throughout the period.

The poultry business was not extensive in this region, yet in 1865 there were in Humboldt County 8100 chickens, producing 14,971 dozen eggs; 123 ducks; 176 geese, and 303 turkeys. There were also 503 hives of bees.

Grains. General agriculture was also very much affected by the Indian wars. In many cases the growing or garnered crops were destroyed by the savages, or the isolated farmer was forced to leave his holdings and seek safety in the towns. Despite this handicap, as noted earlier in the chapter, the business showed a great increase during this half decade, the number of acres of cultivated land having more than doubled. The greatest increase was between 1861 and 1862,

⁶² *Ibid.*, July 30, 1864; California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1865: 136.

⁶³ California Surveyor general, *Report*, *passim*.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.* The numbers were 5498 in 1862; 3344 in 1863; and 5530 in 1864. *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 26, 1864.

⁶⁵ *Humboldt Times*, May 11, 1861.

when the number of acres under cultivation increased from 4534 to 8558. Following this period there was a temporary decline due to the Indian hostilities, the number of acres cultivated in 1863 being only 4419. The next year again showed an increase to 7078 acres, while in 1865 the area cultivated amounted to 9060 acres.⁶⁶

At first wheat was the chief grain crop, but it later gave precedence to oats. During the season 1859-60 there were 1564 acres sown in wheat, producing a yield of 40,563 bushels.⁶⁷ Wheat became a drug on the market, while the supply of other grains was low and the prices correspondingly high.⁶⁸ During the next few years both the acreage and production of wheat decreased gradually, until in 1865 there were but 635 acres sown, yielding 20,409 bushels;⁶⁹ and on the other hand the acreage in oats increased from 542 in 1860, to 2803 in the year 1865, the yield during these years increasing correspondingly from 15,723 to 115,720 bushels. Barley and corn are also found in the list of grains raised, but they were of less importance. In 1860, 58 acres of barley produced 1991 bushels; in 1865 the acreage numbered 240 and the yield was 9232 bushels. The corn crop reached its highest point for this period in 1863, when 5850 bushels were produced on 149 acres.

Hay. Besides this production of grains large amounts were annually cut for hay. In 1860 the *Humboldt Times* stated that during the previous year \$20,000 worth of hay, oats, and other feed had been shipped into the region while thousands of acres of fine meadow land around the bay were well adapted to raising hay, and, farther back, oats, barley and other crops could easily be produced. It strongly advocated that the Humboldt farmers raise their own forage.⁷⁰ During the spring of 1860 several acres of timothy were sown on the bottom lands near Arcata with most promising results. This hay when shipped to San Francisco by A. Jacoby brought an excellent price.⁷¹ From that time on,

⁶⁶ California Surveyor general, *Report, passim*. The figures for 1864 are taken from the table accompanying Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865.

⁶⁷ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1860: 32.

⁶⁸ *Humboldt Times*, July 14, 1860.

⁶⁹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1864-1865: 118.

⁷⁰ *Humboldt Times*, July 14, 1860.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, July 21, Aug. 4, Oct. 27, 1860.

with the exception of the years 1862 and 1863, the hay crop constantly increased.⁷²

Peas and Beans. Peas and beans were also grown very extensively. In 1860 the production amounted to 31,584 and 575 bushels respectively. While the amounts harvested during the following years were large they did not exceed the production of 1860.

The Potato Crop. As early as 1856 potatoes were recognized as an important article of export, but by 1860 they had become still more important. During that year 208 acres planted to potatoes produced 56,632 bushels, and the next year the total production amounted to 60,070 bushels. In 1862 the number of acres planted to potatoes was nearly twice that of the two previous years, yet the amount produced fell to 27,680 owing to the destruction wrought by cutworms, one man claiming to have lost as much as \$4,000.⁷³ During the following years the acreage planted to potatoes constantly increased. In 1864 there were 470 acres thus employed, yielding 87,094 bushels.

During these years the leading varieties were the Lady Fingers and Pigeon Point potatoes.⁷⁴ The former were especially popular on account of their great size, while the latter were both large and prolific. Kneeland of Arcata is said to have gathered 308 sacks of these Pigeon Point potatoes from one acre, while another man claimed forty pounds from a single hill. According to the report of the county assessor the average yield of potatoes in 1865 was 185 bushels to the acre.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the quality of the Humboldt potatoes was recognized as superior to that of any others on the market, with the result that they brought a higher price.⁷⁶

Tobacco Culture. During the latter part of the Civil War period the high prices asked for tobacco tempted many of the farmers in Humboldt County and elsewhere in California to experiment with tobacco raising.⁷⁷ Long before the occupation by the whites the Indians of the California coast

⁷² *Humboldt Times*, July 20, 1861; May 10, Aug. 9, Oct. 11, 1862.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, June 21, July 19, 1862.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1861; Dec. 5, 1863; Oct. 29, 1864; Dec. 16, 1865.

⁷⁵ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1864-1865: 122; *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 4, 1865.

⁷⁶ Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865.

⁷⁷ Cronise, *The natural wealth of California*, 360.

had grown and smoked a plant described by writers as a species of tobacco.⁷⁸ The first attempt to raise tobacco in this region was in 1862, when Hardy, a settler located near the mouth of Mad River, raised some that was pronounced good.⁷⁹ The following years many others, especially in the Mattole Valley, took up the matter more extensively. M. J. Conklin of this valley is said to have grown some fine tobacco and to have succeeded in curing it in a very satisfactory manner.⁸⁰ Seth Kinman of Table Bluff also raised a large crop, and had an exhibit of tobacco and cigars at the annual county fair which led the *Times* to declare its belief that tobacco would soon be "the leading article of profit among the products of Humboldt County."⁸¹ In the year 1864 there was increased acreage devoted to tobacco culture, but for some reason it was found impossible to cure the product in a manner capable of meeting the competition of other regions, and because of this, together with the close of the Civil War, the new industry quickly disappeared.⁸²

Fruits. The raising of fruits was also becoming quite important, especially on the bottom lands around Arcata, in the lower Eel River Valley, and in Mattole Valley.⁸³ Among the many varieties raised, apples were by far the most popular, for since both soil and climate were especially adapted to apple culture, the Humboldt apples were early declared to be "equal if not superior to any on the market."⁸⁴ In 1860 there were 15,885 apple trees in Humboldt County; by 1865, after some fluctuation, the number had increased to 37,249. Pears, plums and cherries were also popular fruits, as shown by the increase during this period, pears increasing from 567 trees in 1860, to 1113 in 1865; plums from 508 trees to 1931; and cherries from 336 trees to 824. On the other hand, experience showed that other kinds of fruits were less adapted to the climate of the coast region. This was espe-

⁷⁸ Drake, *World encompassed*, 222; Bodega in Mourelle, *Journal of a voyage in 1775*, 21; Shaler in *American register*, 111, 143; Gibbs in Schoolcraft, *Archives*, III, 141.

⁷⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 15, 1862.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 24, Sept. 5, Oct. 24, 1863.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1863.

⁸² California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1864-1865: 124, shows 2165 acres devoted to tobacco, while the next year but 40 acres are reported. *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 12, Feb. 6, 1864. As late as 1871 Hanson on Yager Creek again tried the experiment, but without success. *Ibid.*, Oct. 14, 1871.

⁸³ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 5, Oct. 17, Nov. 1, 1863. In 1861 E. W. Myers opened a nursery known as the Eel River Valley Nursery. He advertized 50,000 trees for sale. *Ibid.*, Jan. 5, 1861.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 9, 1861.

cially true in relation to the raising of peaches. Reports show that there were 2330 peach trees in the county in 1860, whereas in 1865 there were but 930.⁸⁵ Some very good peaches were grown in favored locations near the bay and on lower Eel River, but peach growing on a large scale was not profitable.⁸⁶ Similarly, the number of apricot trees decreased from 245 in 1862, to only three trees in the reports for 1865; and quinces from 205 in 1861, to 159 in 1865. Other products to be found in smaller quantities were figs, nectarines, almonds and walnuts.⁸⁷

In addition to the larger fruits berries were also raised very successfully, as might be expected from the abundance of wild berries to be found in the region. Strawberries were far in the lead, there being 13,500 plants reported in the year 1861,⁸⁸ and 34,597 in 1865. Raspberries were also popular, the number of bushes increasing from 1262 in 1860, to 15,576 in 1865. Gooseberries remained about constant, there being 5205 bushes in 1861 and 4939 in 1865. Grapes also were raised to some extent. The greatest number of vines was reported in 1860, when there were 5160. By 1865, the grape vines numbered but 991, being mostly wine grapes. During that year the reports show that 400 gallons of wine were produced in Humboldt County.

From these statements it will be seen that the fruit industry of Humboldt County was not without importance. Statistics show that the income from this business steadily increased, the amounts being \$2,045 in 1861, \$2,785 in 1863, and \$10,163 in 1865.

⁸⁵ In 1862 the number reported was 9968, but this does not appear consistent with the facts. California Surveyor general, *Report, passim*.

⁸⁶ H. S. Comstock and James Hanna grew peaches in their gardens on the bay, *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 5, Oct. 24, 1863; Sept. 2, 1865; and Sam Strong raised some on Eel River, Sept. 12, 1865.

⁸⁷ The reports for 1861 show 36 almond, 20 fig, 59 nectarine and 17 walnut trees. The latter reports do not justify any comparisons for this short period.

⁸⁸ The figures given are 135,000 plants, but this is out of proportion to other facts.

CHAPTER XIII

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, 1860-1865

The Lumber Industry. The rapid rise of the lumber business during the early years of American occupation of the Humboldt Bay region, together with its subsequent temporary decline due to financial reaction,¹ has been considered in an earlier chapter. By the beginning of the second decade the prospects for this industry were again good, and the mills around the bay were operating to their full capacity.

Estimates differ as to the exact number of mills in Humboldt County in the year 1860. The county assessor reports that there were nine, seven operated by steam and two by water power. These represented a total valuation of \$25,500, and produced 9,575,000 feet of cut lumber.² The report of the federal census for the same year shows fifteen lumber establishments within the county, representing a capital of \$36,000, and producing \$93,716 worth of lumber products.³

Early in September, 1860, the Bay Mill was destroyed by fire. This was one of the oldest lumber establishments around the bay, having been erected in 1853 at a cost of \$20,000. Dolbeer & McLean, the proprietors, immediately took steps toward the reconstruction of the mill, which was again ready for operation in November.⁴ The high water caused by the early winter rains was utilized in bringing logs down the various streams to tidewater, and the season of 1860-61 indicated a new life in the lumber industry.⁵

Aroused by this revival of activity among the lumber mills of the bay the *Humboldt Times* was led to give a detailed description of the various mills located there. Many long in need of repairs were now put in good condition, and

¹ *Ante*, 117 *et seq.*

² California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1860.

³ United States, *Eighth census*, 1860, *Manufactures*, (Serial 1204), 25. This reports but 32 employed which is a very low figure. The cost of raw materials was \$36,399 and of labor, \$27,120.

⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 8, Oct. 27, 1860.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Nov. 17, Dec. 8, 1860. By the first freshet about a million feet of logs were floated down Freshwater Slough, while about twice that amount awaited the next rains. For pictures illustrating the lumber industry see Coy, *Pictorial history of California*, nos. 240-244.

all were in full operation.⁶ The first to be considered was the Ryan Mill, which had recently been overhauled and in part rebuilt. It was now equipped with new saws and other machinery, and, with eleven men, was putting out 16,000 feet of fencing lumber daily. The mill of John Vance & Company was much newer and in good condition. Here twenty-six men were employed, the average daily output being 20,000 feet of lumber. Next above the Vance Mill was that of Jones & Company, which had but recently changed hands and was in good repair. Ten men operated this mill, turning out 12,000 feet daily. The Bay Mill, previously mentioned, employed eighteen men and produced daily 20,000 feet of lumber. The Muly Mill, much smaller than the others, employed but three or four men and had a capacity of about 5000 feet of lumber a day. This mill had just been redeemed from a sheriff's sale, overhauled and made ready for operation. The old Picayune Mill, no longer fit for use, was at this time stripped of its machinery and abandoned. These mills together furnished employment to some seventy-five men and produced daily about 70,000 feet of lumber besides laths, pickets, and shingles.

Later in the year the Eureka Mill, formerly owned by Ryan & Duff, was refitted and placed in good condition. It was equipped with new machinery, making it capable of an output of 45,000 feet per day. In connection with this mill a foundry and machine shop were established.⁷ Canfield & Jones of the old Smily Mill also introduced new machinery, thus greatly increasing the output of that mill. The new machinery consisted of a carriage and saws. Logs were cut to a thickness of twenty-two inches, then placed upon this carriage, which worked automatically, cutting both ways. The initial cost was \$2,500, but it could easily cut 3000 feet per hour, and was, therefore, considered an important invention.⁸ The result of all this activity was a great increase in the production of lumber. The assessor's report for 1861-62 states that the production of lumber in Humboldt County was 14,968,955 feet, besides five million shingles.⁹

⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 26, 1861.

⁷ *Ibid.*, May 3, 11, 18, 1861.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 30, 1861. At this time there were but three of these machines on the Pacific Coast.

⁹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1862: 115.

The year 1861-62 was the most successful season the mills enjoyed until the local Indian disturbances had subsided and the great national depression due to the Civil War had passed, permitting a return once more to normal conditions. In October, 1862, the original mill, built by J. T. Ryan in 1852, was burned,¹⁰ and during the following year the shingle mill of Garwood & Vance suffered a similar fate.¹¹ According to the assessor's report there were in 1865 eight mills in operation in Humboldt County, their output during the previous year being 12,693,000 feet of lumber.¹²

Grist Mills. In addition to the lumber business many other lines of manufacturing were developed. As early as 1854 flour or grist mills had been established in the region.¹³ Four of these mills were reported in Humboldt County in 1860. Two of them, valued at \$8,000, were operated by steam; the others, assessed at \$3,500, were water mills. The total amount of grain ground by these mills was 16,500 bushels.¹⁴ During November of this year the Duff Mill at Eureka was burned, the loss being estimated at \$3,000, besides \$1,000 worth of flour.¹⁵

During the spring of 1861 a mill was built by M. K. Langdon in the Mattole Valley for the benefit of the settlers of that district,¹⁶ and during 1862 a new flour mill upon the bay was opened by Carson & Duff. This mill was conveniently located upon tidewater, so that grain could be received by water or by land, and was declared by the local paper to be the best arranged and best finished flour mill for its capacity in northern California.¹⁷ It had not been running many months before an explosion of the boiler damaged the plant to the amount of \$2,000.¹⁸ The boiler of the abandoned Picayune saw mill was put in place of the one destroyed, and the mill was soon in operation again.¹⁹

Fisheries. In the period here under consideration the low price obtained for packed salmon very seriously affected the

¹⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 18, 1862.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, July 18, 1863.

¹² California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1864-1865: 142; *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 4, 1865.

¹³ *Ante*, 113.

¹⁴ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1860.

¹⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 24, 1860.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, May 25, 1861.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 1, Sept. 13, 1862.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 3, 1863.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 11, 1863.

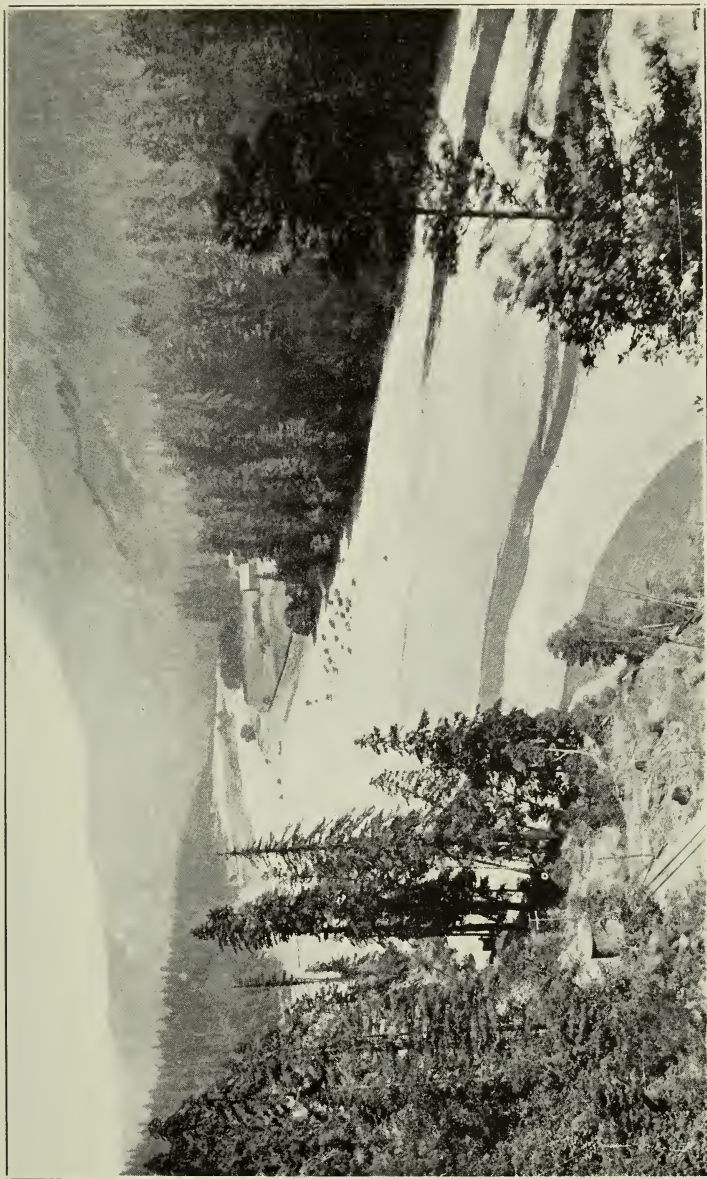


Photo by H. C. Tibbitts

IN THE REDWOOD REALM, ALONG EEL RIVER

Humboldt fisheries. During the earlier years this had become an important industry, but by 1861 the price dropped to a point 75 per cent below that previously obtained, with the result that many of the establishments were compelled to abandon the business temporarily. Salmon, however, were plentiful, J. H. Dungan & Company taking 2600 salmon in one haul, which when cured amounted to 140 barrels.²⁰ In 1862 Dungan & Ellery were the only firm still engaged in the salmon business.²¹

Evidence that advancing civilization had not completely destroyed the sea life usually associated only with frontier coast is to be found in the fact that in 1861 a whaling company selected Trinidad as a base of operations;²² and that a sea otter was killed in Humboldt Bay during the spring of 1864.²³ Neither of these animals, however, were sufficiently plentiful to be of much commercial importance.

Shipbuilding. The abundance of timber close to the water's edge had early led those familiar with shipbuilding to realize the opportunities here offered for that industry, and numerous sailing vessels and steamers were built during the fifties.²⁴

Early in 1860 the *Pert*, built for service on Humboldt Bay, was launched.²⁵ In November, 1861 the reports show that two vessels were in process of construction: One, built by the Fay Brothers on the peninsula, was seventy feet long by twenty feet, six inches in the beam, and was of about eighty tons burthen; the other, a vessel of about the same dimensions, was being built by Gilman in his yards directly across the bay from Eureka.²⁶ This latter vessel was probably the *Alcyone*, a lumber schooner having a capacity of 80,000 feet.²⁷ During the summer of 1864 the *Phoebe Fay*, a schooner of eighty tons, was launched by the Fay Brothers.²⁸ While the earlier ships had been built for service upon the bay, these later ones were seagoing vessels, and demonstrated the practicability of shipbuilding upon a larger scale than

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 9, 1861.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 1, 1862.

²² *Ibid.*, Oct. 26, 1861.

²³ *Ibid.*, Mar. 12, 1864.

²⁴ *Ante*, 134

²⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 21, 1860.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1861.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Dec. 28, 1861.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, June 25, 1864.

had so far been attempted. Trinidad also claimed the distinction of having a vessel built at her port, for in 1863, the schooner *Ruth*, a lumber vessel eighty-seven feet in length by twenty-one foot beam, was built there by Captain Backus. The hull was constructed and launched at Trinidad and later towed to Humboldt Bay where it was fitted with rigging and canvas.²⁹

Shipping, 1860-1865. Sailing Vessels. The Fraser River gold excitement of the summer of 1858 almost paralyzed the shipping business of the Pacific Coast, all available vessels being pressed into service by the goldseekers. By 1859, however, conditions once again approached normal, and for several years thereafter the number of vessels passing over Humboldt Bay remained about the same.³⁰

The increased activity in the lumber business during the early sixties was naturally a great stimulus to the trade of the lumber-carrying vessels. During August, 1860, the exportation of lumber from Humboldt Bay amounted to 1,135,000 feet. While this was much above the average, it nevertheless shows the extent of shipping operations at that time. During the two following months the shipments of lumber amounted to 390,000 and 640,000 feet respectively.³¹ During 1861 ninety-one sailing vessels left the bay, carrying large amounts of lumber and produce. In October 1,370,000 feet of lumber and 700,000 laths were exported by sailing vessels in addition to that carried by the steamers;³² and in November the shipments aggregated 2,040,000 feet of lumber and 1,030,000 laths.³³ The steamer *Columbia* also carried much lumber and produce. The freight rates upon the steamer were higher than by sailing vessels, with the result that most of the lumber was shipped by the latter, although produce and passengers employed the steamer service. San Francisco was of course the chief port with which this commerce was conducted, but during the year 1861, San Pedro, San Luis Obispo, and Sacramento

²⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 17, 1863.

³⁰ The information for these years is taken from the marine news as published in the *Humboldt Times*. During the earlier years this is quite full, but in the later years less satisfactory. As omissions sometimes occur in the news items, the figures here given should be taken as an understatement.

³¹ *Humboldt Times*, August-October, 1860. After this date the *Times* fails to give the amount of lumber carried by each vessel.

³² *Ibid.*, Nov. 2, 1861.

³³ *Ibid.*, Dec. 7, 1861.

also appear as domestic ports, while several cargoes were sent by schooners to Tahiti in the South Seas.³⁴

Following the year 1861 the number of sailing vessels visiting Humboldt Bay was not again so great until the year 1864, although shipping continued with much regularity. Besides San Francisco other California ports to which lumber was shipped were Sacramento, Tomales, and San Pedro, the latter now having become an important receiving port for Humboldt lumber. During these years many vessels sailed for foreign ports with cargoes of lumber. The bark *Hartford* sailed in January, 1863, for Tahiti, and was followed later by the bark *D. M. Hall*. During this year one vessel departed for Valparaiso, Chile, and two for Honolulu. In 1865 four other vessels carried cargoes to the Sandwich Islands.

Steamer Service. Although the great bulk of the freight was transported to and from Humboldt Bay by means of sailing vessels, much was also carried by the ocean steamers which now made more or less regular visits to this port. The lower prices charged for freight by the sailing vessels gave them practically all the lumber and a good share of the produce trade, but express, general merchandise, and much produce, especially live stock, were transported by the steamers.

Attention has already been given to the early difficulties which the people of Humboldt Bay encountered before they secured a regular steamer service.³⁵ After 1858 the *Columbia* which had then been awarded a mail contract, became a more or less regular visitor. There was at times, however, much uncertainty regarding the continuance of this policy on the part of the *Columbia*, and many of the people urged that Humboldt should have a steamer of its own.³⁶ In March, 1861, the *Columbia* was sold and for a time it was feared that she would be taken off this run,³⁷ but she was continued under the new management. The price of freight was reduced to ten dollars per ton, and it was advertised that the vessel would make three trips a month on certain

³⁴ These were the *Golden State*, 90,000 ft., Feb. 23; *Gen. Morgan*, 95,000, Mar. 6; and the *Golden State* again, Aug. 30.

³⁵ *Ante*, 125 et seq.

³⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 29, 1860; Feb. 23, 1861.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Feb. 23, Mar. 16, 1861.

scheduled days.³⁸ Another reduction in rates brought the charges for freight down to eight dollars per ton, and passenger fare from thirty to twenty dollars for cabin passage and from fifteen dollars down to ten for steerage.³⁹ Notwithstanding these reduced rates the steamer was unable to compete successfully with the sailing vessels, and complaints were frequent that the business did not warrant the expenditure.⁴⁰ Finally, during March, 1862, the *Columbia* was again sold and her place temporarily taken first by the steamer *Oregon*,⁴¹ and later by the *Panama*. The latter steamer had served on the route between San Francisco and the Isthmus during the earlier years, but now operated along the northern coast. The *Panama* visited Humboldt Bay with some degree of regularity until the fall of 1864, when it was withdrawn.⁴² Following the withdrawal of the *Panama*, steamer service was very irregular and once again there was much talk of a steamer especially for the Humboldt Bay trade.⁴³ Since the wreck of the *Arispe* in 1854,⁴⁴ the steamer service to Humboldt Bay had been but a part of the more important Oregon trade, and while at times it had been as good as the traffic warranted, at other times it was far from satisfactory. This movement in favor of a local steamer resulted in the building of the *Del Norte*, a vessel of 601 tons, which was launched in December, 1864, and began regular service in May of the following year, running twice a month between San Francisco, Humboldt Bay and Crescent City.⁴⁵

Local Commerce. Before 1862, when the wagon road was built around Humboldt Bay, water traffic was the only practical means of communication between Eureka, Arcata, and other points located on the bay. At times the rivalry between the vessels engaged in this trade was keen. The usual fare between Eureka and Arcata was fifty cents, yet during the spring of 1860, after the launching of the steamer *Pert*, the rate was cut to twenty-five cents, the *Pert* and the

³⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 6, 26, 1861.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 6, June 1, 1861.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, June 8, 1861; Jan. 11, 1862. For accounts of shipping of live stock, *ibid.*, Feb. 3, May 9, 1861; of lumber, Nov. 2, 1861.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 15, 1862; the *Oregon* visited Humboldt Bay Mar. 12 and Apr. 17, 1862.

⁴² Last visit, Oct. 18, 1864.

⁴³ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 20, 1864.

⁴⁴ *Ante*, 127.

⁴⁵ *Humboldt Times*, May 13, Oct. 14, 1865.

Satellite being rivals for this trade.⁴⁶ Later in the year the rate was again raised to fifty cents, but competition still continued, and the sloops *Live Yankee* and *Lucy W.* joined in the business, making trips twice daily.⁴⁷

During the summer of 1860 the sloop *Ida* was fitted up for carrying grain upon the bay. Her first trip was made to Eel River, which it was hoped would prove navigable, the depth of water on the bar being reported as ten feet at low tide.⁴⁸ After running for several months between Eureka and Hookton and Myer's Landing, at the southern end of the bay, she was again overhauled and relaunched as the steamer *Ida*, and for many years continued to operate upon the bay.⁴⁹ In 1862 the *Laura Ellen*, a small, light-draught steamer of thirty-four tons, owned by Captain H. H. Buhne, made her appearance.⁵⁰ She proved so successful in this trade that it was decided to place her upon Eel River, where she could be employed in bringing produce down the river to the transfer point at Table Bluff, whence it was taken to Humboldt Bay.⁵¹ The success of this enterprise may be judged from the fact that a corporation styled the Eel River Navigation Company, with a capital of \$37,500, was formed in October, 1865, for the purpose of carrying on trade and commerce from Eel River to other ports of the Pacific.⁵²

Harbor Improvements. The value of Humboldt Bay as the entrepot for all this district, as well as a lumber-producing port of increasing importance, made it imperative that the harbor should be safe and convenient for the larger vessels. After much delay the erection and equipment of a lighthouse was completed in December, 1856, but it did not prove as helpful to navigation as had been anticipated for several reasons. The situation upon a low sandspit just north of the entrance prevented the light from being seen very far at sea; while on the other hand it was of no great assistance to local shipping since the passage of Humboldt Bar was never attempted at night. Later other defects became manifest, probably the most serious being that there

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1860.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 16, 1860.

⁴⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 11, 18, 1860.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1860; July 6, 1861; Jan. 9, 1864.

⁵⁰ She was 80 ft. long and drew 22 inches of water. *Ibid.*, Sept. 27, Oct. 18, 1862.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 4, 1865.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Oct. 14, 1865. Among the leaders in the company were J. D. Bristol, N. Patrick, J. H. Dungan and others. Of the later history of this company nothing is known.

were times when the light failed.⁵³ Furthermore, its position nearly caused its destruction, for during the high tides of November, 1865, notwithstanding that it had been erected a half-mile from the surf, the waves washed entirely around it. The construction of a breakwater became necessary to prevent its being washed away.⁵⁴

Of great importance to navigators was the marking of the crooked and changeable channel leading into Humboldt Bay. In January, 1860, the legislature passed a joint resolution urging upon Congress that additional lighthouses be erected along the coast, and asking an appropriation for the placing of buoys to mark the channel at the entrance of Humboldt Bay.⁵⁵ The urgent necessity of this action was demonstrated by the number of vessels lost while attempting to make the passage.⁵⁶ In December, 1861, the tug *Fearless*, while attempting to enter the bay, bumped upon the bar, lost her propeller, and narrowly escaped being entirely wrecked.⁵⁷ In the early part of 1863 a number of accidents in close succession called attention to the dangers to be encountered by navigators. In January the brig *Aeolus*, while in tow by the tug *Mary Ann*, struck the bar and was wrecked. While attempting to save the larger vessel the tug itself was caught in the breakers and thrown upon the south beach, from which position it was rescued only after much delay and labor by transporting it across the peninsula to the bay.⁵⁸ In the meantime the tug *Merrimac*, while on its way to replace the *Mary Ann*, capsized in attempting to cross the bar, and only with difficulty was saved from being a total loss.⁵⁹ In November, 1864, the bark *Hartford*, becalmed while crossing the bar, was carried onto the north beach by the tide.⁶⁰

The increase in lumber shipments to foreign ports greatly encouraged the ambitions of the Humboldt people for the establishment of a port of entry at Eureka. The legislature

⁵³ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 9, 1864.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, Dec. 2, 30, 1865.

⁵⁵ *Statutes of California*, 1860: 414.

⁵⁶ *Ante*, 122, n. 29. Since the arrival of the tug *Mary Ann* (1854), the list of vessels wrecked included the schooner *Sierra Nevada*, December, 1854; schooner *Toronto*, May, 1856; schooner *Ryerson*, December, 1858; and the bark *Success* in January, 1859. *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 2, 1854; May 24, 1856; Dec. 18, 1858; Jan. 1, 1859.

⁵⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 28, 1861.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 31, Feb. 7, May 2, 1863.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 28, Mar. 7, May 30, 1863.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 19, Dec. 3, 1864.

presented the matter to Congress in 1860 and again in 1862, urging that Humboldt, Klamath, and Del Norte counties be made a separate collection district, with Eureka as the chief port.⁶¹ No such action was, however, taken by Congress.

The Overland Road. Although all of the freighting and nearly all of the travel between Humboldt Bay and the central part of the state was by water, there was an increasing agitation for a road connecting these regions. Road viewers appointed to consider the feasibility of this road in 1859 reported in favor of constructing it between Long Valley, Mendocino County and Hydesville. Insufficient funds prevented any further action being taken either at that time⁶² or during the years immediately following, notwithstanding the repeated efforts of those favoring the project.⁶³ A trail continued to be used by all who desired to make the passage by land,⁶⁴ and although the running of stages or other vehicles was impossible in the absence of a road, the firm of Haskell & Force of Hydesville made it a part of their business to furnish "good riding animals" for the accommodation of the traveling public while making the distance between the regular stage roads.⁶⁵

Local Roads. During these years much improvement is to be noticed in the construction of roads in the region around Humboldt Bay. The most important of these was the one connecting Arcata and Eureka. In June, 1861, this road was ready for use from Arcata to Brainard's Point, and during the next year it was completed to Eureka.⁶⁶ In earlier years it had been practically a day's journey on horseback between the two towns, but now the trip could be made with ease in two and a half hours.⁶⁷ The heavy timber came so close to the marshlands that the road builders had to contend with both of these unfavorable elements, and much attention was required to keep it in good repair.⁶⁸

During the years before the Indian troubles became so general as to interfere seriously in the trade with the

⁶¹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 4, Feb. 22, 1862.

⁶² *Ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1859; Sept. 8, 1860.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1862; Jan. 9, July 30, 1864. There was already a road to Long Valley from the south and to Hydesville from the north. It was claimed the missing gap would cost but \$25,000.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 28, July 14, Aug. 11, 1860.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 21, 1861.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, June 22, 1861; Aug. 9, 1862.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 9, 1862.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, June 11, Oct. 29, 1864; Sept. 2, Nov. 24, 1865.

Trinity and Klamath River mines, the trails leading to these regions were much improved, especially by the construction of bridges over the larger streams. One of these was constructed by Mr. Martin near his ferry, three miles below Weitchpec, at a cost of \$4,000. It had two hundred and ninety-eight feet of clear span, a width of eight feet, and hung ninety-one feet above the water.⁶⁹ Another bridge was built by Mr. Lake over the Trinity River in the Hoopa Valley.⁷⁰

Mail Service. The story of the mail service into the Humboldt region during the period 1860 to 1865 was one of almost constant complaint. The inherent difficulties in transporting the mails through such a region sometimes prevented the contractors from fulfilling their agreements, while lack of knowledge as to the real conditions on the part of the officials in charge of the postal department prevented them from administering affairs wisely.

The irregularity with which the steamers visited Humboldt Bay and the need for increased postal facilities resulted in an agitation for an overland weekly mail into the region. On January 24, 1860, the two houses of the state legislature passed a concurrent resolution asking Congress for additional mail routes, among these being a weekly mail from Cloverdale, Sonoma County, to Eureka.⁷¹ In due time the federal authorities authorized the establishment of a semimonthly mail connecting Healdsburg, Sonoma County, with Trinity County, via Arcata. By the end of the year the new service was in operation.⁷²

Apprehension soon arose lest the establishment of the route by land should cause the ocean service to be abandoned.⁷³ That this was not an idle fear became evident when the postmaster at San Francisco refused to give Humboldt Bay mail to the steamer, stating that in so doing he was acting under directions from the postmaster general.⁷⁴ It soon became apparent that the overland service alone was inadequate. Travel over the mountain trails was difficult

⁶⁹ *Humboldt Times*, May 11, July 13, Sept. 28, 1861. It was supported by two 2½-in. cables, 500 feet long.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 12, 1861.

⁷¹ *Statutes of California*, 1860: 414.

⁷² *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 11, Nov. 14, 21, 1860. This mail route seems to have been authorized by Congress June 14, 1858, *Statutes at Large*, XI, 339; XII, 153.

⁷³ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 1, 1860.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 29, 1860; Feb. 2, 1861.

even under favorable conditions. The contractors lost much time at first in perfecting details and selecting routes⁷⁵ but the later service was not much better, due, it was charged, to poor equipment and inefficient management.⁷⁶ Finally, during April, 1861, the original contractors gave up the business.⁷⁷ The mail service had by this time been increased to semiweekly trips, an additional remuneration of \$5,000 being allowed. For several months there was no complaint;⁷⁸ but in the fall delays again became frequent,⁷⁹ and in the winter matters grew still worse, at times there being no mail for intervals of two months.⁸⁰

Agitation for revival of the mail service by steamer grew more insistent, and Congress passed an appropriation for this purpose.⁸¹ The terms granted to the steamers were not so favorable as the company desired, and while the mail was carried by them it was done in an irregular and unsatisfactory manner.⁸²

During the summer of 1862 the overland mail service again changed hands, the contract being taken this time by L. B. Gilkey of Arcata.⁸³ Under the new management an attempt was made to give satisfaction to the people of the Humboldt region, and in spite of many difficulties the mails were carried with great regularity.⁸⁴ But in June, 1864, after two years of faithful operation, the overland mail service under Gilkey's management suddenly ceased, due to his financial difficulties. The Indian hostilities had greatly increased the hazard, while on the other hand, the use of currency on the part of the government in paying its obligations reduced the remuneration far below that anticipated by the contractor when he made his bid.⁸⁵ A new contract was let, and after an intermission of two months the overland service was resumed.⁸⁶ The new management did

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 19, 1861.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, Mar. 2, 16, Apr. 6, 13, 1861.

⁷⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 27, 1861. The new contractor was named Henderson.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, June 29, 1861.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, Oct. 19, 26, 1861. These were caused to some extent by Indian hostilities.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 11, Feb. 15, Mar. 29, Apr. 6, 1862.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 1, Apr. 12, 1862.

⁸² *Ibid.*, Aug. 16, 1862. The *Panama* brought a month's mail to Humboldt on August 8, but did not take outgoing mail on her southbound trip.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, June 14, 1862.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, July 19, Aug. 16, Nov. 29, 1862; Oct. 3, 1863.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, June 11, 1864.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, July 2, 23, 1864.

not succeed in keeping to its schedule as Gilkey had done, and soon there were complaints of unnecessary delays⁸⁷ and a renewal of the agitation for more regular service by sea.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 20, 27, Sept. 3, 24, Dec. 3, 24, 1864; Jan. 7, Mar. 18 Sept. 23, 1865.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 30, Oct. 21, 1865.

CHAPTER XIV

THE OIL BOOM OF THE SIXTIES

Discovery of Petroleum. The Indian wars had scarcely been brought to an end before a new era of immigration and settlement was ushered in by the discovery of what was apparently a wonderful deposit of petroleum in the region near Cape Mendocino. It is claimed that oil deposits were noticed as early as 1857,¹ but the first mention of them in the local paper appeared two years later, when a correspondent wrote to the *Humboldt Times* announcing the discovery of springs of petroleum, or "rock oil," at Bear River and also along the trail about five miles down the coast from Cape Mendocino.² During 1861 outside capital became interested, and \$10,000 was paid for the right of operating for oil on the ranch of J. A. Davis at Cape Mendocino.³ Many others then began work near at hand, and reports for a time were most optimistic, but for some reason work was soon suspended.⁴

Revival of Oil Interests, 1864. Although the oil operations of 1861 had not met with much success, the people of the region turned to the matter with renewed interest as soon as the Indian troubles had subsided sufficiently to permit it. Since Congress had not then passed any laws governing the control of oil deposits, and some agreement was considered necessary to give security to their titles and to prevent misunderstanding among the different men engaged in the work, a miners' meeting was called at Mattole, November 7, 1864, at which time the Mattole Mining District was organized and rules and regulations adopted in accordance with the custom usually employed by miners in California. The chief features of these agreements were as follows:⁵

Art. 1st. A quarter section of land shall constitute one claim in this district to be taken in one square body.

¹ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 20, 1861.

² *Ibid.*, June 25, Nov. 19, 1859.

³ *Ibid.*, Apr. 20, 1861. It was believed that the springs here would yield 200 bbls. a day.

⁴ *Ibid.*, June 15, July 20, Sept. 21, Oct. 26, 1861.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1864.

Art. 2nd. A notice shall be posted on each claim describing the boundaries of the same, a copy of which shall be filed with the Recorder of this District within twenty days after it was taken.

Art. 3rd. Only one claim shall be held in this District by occupancy.

Art. 4th. When a claim has been properly staked and recorded it can be held without tools being left upon it; provided the owner shall do or cause to be done upon it at least one day's work every three months. And if a company owning more than one claim lying together work upon one of them it shall be considered as working upon them all . . .

Art. 6th. A miners' meeting may be called to alter or amend these laws by posting three notices in conspicuous places in the District, and one at the office of the Recorder for a period of 20 days.

Art. 7th. No farm at present occupied for agricultural purposes, shall be located as a mining claim, and no person or persons shall, for mining purposes, destroy or injure growing crops, buildings, improvements or fruit trees, except with the consent of the owner . . .

Art. 10th. These By-laws, Rules and Regulations shall take effect from and after November 7th, A. D., 1864."

The organization of the Mattole District was followed very soon by the formation of the Walker District, on the coast between the Mattole and Bear rivers, the regulations of the new district being in all points similar to those just quoted. ⁶

Confusion of Land Titles. The new petroleum mining districts had scarcely been formed before a dispute arose regarding the title to the whole region. This was due to the appearance of William Muldrow, who claimed to be a representative of the Hudson Mining Company, a corporation backed by \$10,000,000. He set forth his claims to the whole coast south of Cape Mendocino under a deed from the Russian government, and exhibited papers in French and English which he said were copies of the original documents which would prove his title to the lands in question. In order not to work too great a hardship upon the settlers he offered as a compromise to pay them one-half the value of their improvements. ⁷

⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 26, 1864.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Dec. 17, 1864. Muldrow had, in fact, during 1859 purchased a part of Sutter's title to the Fort Ross property, including a strip of land one league wide from Point Reyes to Cape Mendocino. *Ibid.*, May, 1860; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 36.

Very naturally this announcement caused consternation among the settlers, many of whom had lived upon the land for a number of years, believing it to be their own. Since they had protected themselves from Indian depredations and from the intrigues of agents of the Indian reservation, had built their homes, and otherwise improved the land, they were not willing to give up their claims without active resistance. They therefore organized a settlers' league to gather evidence in refutation of these claims.⁸ For some months Muldrow pressed his claims, much to the annoyance of the settlers and the oil men. He was not, however, able to carry out his scheme successfully. In July the people of the Walker District declared their readiness to test his claim, and the *Humboldt Times* published a lengthy article giving the history of his claim and exposing its futility.⁹

More perplexing, however, was the question of the title of these oil lands in respect to the federal government. It was assumed that they would be classed as mineral lands, and upon this assumption they were worked under the laws of the mining districts. The instruction of the secretary of the interior that those lands which were suspected of containing oil be excluded from the application of the preemption law gave further strength to this idea, yet no definite action had been taken by any legislative body to determine how a title might be acquired, and claim-jumping was a frequent occurrence.¹⁰

The Oil Boom of 1865. The year 1865 was one of intense excitement not only among the oil enthusiasts but among practically all the people of the region, for they were strongly convinced that the lands contained an "untold wealth" of oil, and that the time was not far distant when petroleum would replace even lumber as the leading article of export.¹¹ As early as February the increase in the population of the Mattole region was noticeable, and soon a new town was established in the vicinity of the Kellogg farm. After some deliberation it was given the name "Petrolia," on account

⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 24, 1864.

⁹ *Ibid.*, July 29, 1865. The fact that the claim had not been presented to the Land Commission during the time allotted debarred it from consideration. Furthermore, the United States Government had already given patents to some of this land.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Sept. 30, Nov. 11, Dec. 16, 1865.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 25, Apr. 1, 1865.

of its location in the midst of this oil region.¹² Early operations seemed to justify the most optimistic predictions, and there was little doubt that the future of the Humboldt region lay in the exploitation of its oil deposits.

The oil men realized the value of expert opinion as a check upon their own observations, and during May a man of practical experience in the oil fields of Pennsylvania was employed to make a test of the oil found here. He reported that the samples examined were superior to the Pennsylvania product.¹³ Other tests likewise demonstrated its high quality.¹⁴ Professor J. D. Whitney, State Geologist, and Professor William H. Brewer of the College of California doubted the existence of oil, but opposed to them were many other able authorities, among others the eminent geologist, Professor William Phipps Blake, who declared that this region was, in its petroleum deposits, "the richest spot in the world."¹⁵

Extent of the Oil Region. Not only were these deposits considered to be of good quality, but they were supposed also to be wide in extent. In one of its editorials the *Humboldt Times* declared its confident belief "that the whole region lying between Cape Mendocino and Trinidad, back to the summit of the foothills, will be found to be rich with this mineral oil ultimately."¹⁶ The location of the many petroleum mining districts during the year shows that this belief was widely shared. The first two, the Mattole and Walker districts, formed in 1864, had naturally been established in the heart of the oil region, and included the territory between the Mattole and Bear rivers for some distance in from the coast.¹⁷ The next to be formed, in the spring of 1865, was the Frazier District, just east of the Mattole District.¹⁸ This was soon followed by the Pennsylvania, Upper Mattole, Shelter Cove, and Mendocino districts, south of the Mattole River, and the Bear River District north of Bear River.¹⁹ During the month of June no less than six other districts were formed, four of them in the

¹² *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 18, Mar. 23, 1865.

¹³ San Francisco, *Bulletin*, May 10, 1865.

¹⁴ *Humboldt Times*, July 8, Sept. 9, 1865.

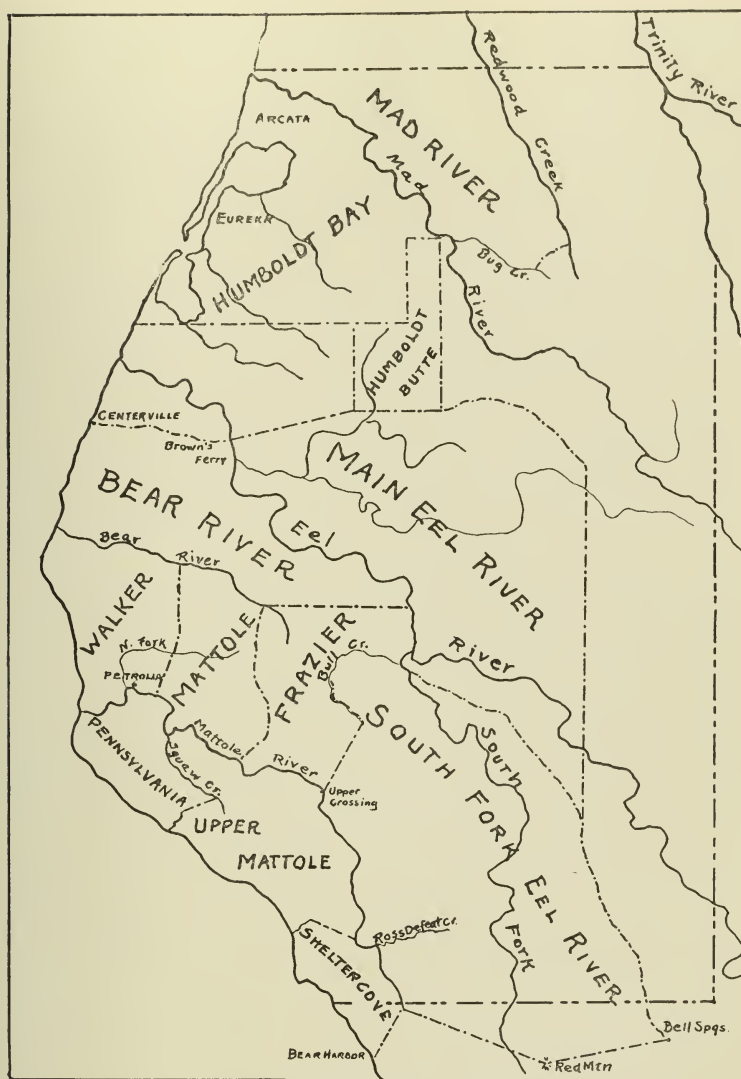
¹⁵ *Ibid.*, June 10, Sept. 16, Dec. 23, 1865.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 8, 1865.

¹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 12, 26, 1864.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Apr. 29, 1865.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, May 27, June 10, 1865.



OIL MINING DISTRICTS, 1865

Humboldt Bay and Mad River section, the first being the Humboldt Butte District, in the vicinity of Iaqua and Kneeland Prairie.²⁰ Two other districts, the main Eel River and

²⁰ The others were the Humboldt Bay District, the Mad River District, and the Mad River Coal and Oil District. This latter, however, was included within the territory of the Mad River and Humboldt Bay districts, and ran from near the mouth of Little River to Korbel, and up the divide between Redwood Creek and Mad River to Boulder Creek, thence to Humboldt Butte District and to the Bay by Jacoby Creek. *Ibid.*, June 17, 24, 1865.

the South Fork of Eel River, formed later in the month, included the greater portion of the region on the upper Eel River.²¹ From this it will be seen that with the exception of the lower Eel River Valley and a portion of the Bald Hills region along the eastern edge practically the whole of Humboldt County was included in some one of these petroleum mining districts. In all of them operations for oil were carried on to a greater or less degree.

Success Attained in 1865. Much capital was, of course, necessary in order to exploit this resource effectively; therefore one is not surprised to find a large number of corporations formed for this purpose. When it is seen that more than fifty of these companies, with a combined capital exceeding \$35,000,000, were here engaged in this one business in 1865 the great enthusiasm of the people of the region becomes evident.²² About one-half of this amount was owned by three wealthy foreign companies,²³ but the remainder was made up by corporations, averaging from \$30,000 to \$1,000,000, which gave their full attention to this region.²⁴

The Union Mattole Company, incorporated in March, 1865, was one of the first to attain any measure of success, and throughout the whole period outclassed its competitors in the results obtained.²⁵ In May, after boring to a depth of eighty-five feet, this company struck a flow of oil which filled the well to a depth of twenty feet within twenty-four hours, and soon afterward they made their first shipment of oil, amounting to 100 gallons.²⁶ Other companies reported favorable prospects and some results,²⁷ but none of them made shipments as did the Union Mattole Company. The well of this company, except for a short period, was worked with favorable results,²⁸ 850 gallons being exported in August, 275 in September, and 650 in November.²⁹ This

²¹ *Humboldt Times*, July 1, 1865.

²² *Pacific Mining Journal*, Oct. 23, 1865, gives a list of 64 petroleum companies operating in California. Of these 31 are shown to operate in Humboldt County, while the remainder are divided among the other counties, in part as follows: Colusa 9; Contra Costa 7; Los Angeles 3; Santa Barbara 1; Tulare 1.

²³ Liverpool, Philadelphia, and St. Petersburg companies.

²⁴ Seven companies had less than \$100,000 capital; twelve between \$100,000 and \$200,000; eight between \$200,000 and \$300,000; seven between \$300,000 and \$500,000; eleven between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000; while three were capitalized for \$1,000,000. *Humboldt Times*, *passim*; Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of Incorporation*.

²⁵ This company was incorporated in San Francisco with a capital of \$620,000, the directors being J. G. Richards, William Ede, and E. Bosqui. *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 8, 1865.

²⁶ *Humboldt Times*, July 1, 1865.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 19, Sept. 30, Oct. 7, 14, 1865.

²⁸ *Humboldt Times*, July 8, 22, 29, 1865.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 19, 26, Sept. 16, Nov. 25, 1865.

well was then down 250 feet and showed such good prospects that the company refused an annual rental of \$10,000 for it.³⁰

By November the winter season caused most of the wells to suspend operations, and the first enthusiasm of the oil seekers gave place to more sober judgment. On many sides were heard complaints that the operations of the year had proved a failure, while others declared their confidence in the success of the venture and prophesied that the product of the wells would soon create a "degree of prosperity in this part of the state altogether unsurpassed."³¹ Several of the wells were down to a depth of two hundred feet or more,³² and some were yielding good returns, while in many other places outcroppings of oil and gas jets proved without a doubt that oil existed near at hand in large quantities, notwithstanding the fact that so far the returns had been slight.

Failure of the Oil Project. During the winter of 1865-66 the boring of wells continued whenever the rainy season permitted, for it was hoped that a strike would soon be made and their brightest expectations realized.³³ A new well on the place of J. T. Barber in Eel River Valley was sunk, and at a depth of 145 feet showed results similar to those obtained in the Mattole region.³⁴ By the end of March the Davis well was down to a depth of 500 feet and the Jeffrey well to 400, both reporting flattering prospects, while during that month the Union Mattole Company shipped out twelve barrels of oil.³⁵

Notwithstanding this activity and the seemingly favorable results from these wells an increasing number of people began to express a skeptical attitude, and, for various reasons, many of the wells suspended operation.³⁶ During the summer many were discouraged and left the region, while others renewed their efforts to prove the existence of oil in paying

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1865.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 18, 1865. It should, however, be noted that the name of J. E. Wyman, the editor, appears as director of several of these companies.

³² Joel's Flat, 270 feet; Irwin Davis, 250; Jeffrey, 240; *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 11, 1865. By December the Hawley Farm well was down 270 feet, and the Cassin Farm well to 316 feet, *ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1865.

³³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 3, 10, 1866.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1866.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Mar. 10, 17, 24, 1866.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, May 12, 1866.

quantities.³⁷ It had been suggested that the failure was due to inadequate equipment, so better machinery was introduced, especially for the Davis and Jeffery wells.³⁸ In a final effort to save the industry and to continue the operations, a new company, known as the Humboldt County Oil Company, was formed.³⁹ Under the new management the Davis well was sunk to a depth of 1300 feet and, for a time, prospects seemed hopeful,⁴⁰ but in spite of these efforts the project was doomed to failure.⁴¹

Permanent Results of the Oil Excitement. After two years of more or less intense excitement and much real activity, the oil industry, with the facilities then at hand, had proved a failure. Nevertheless, in spite of this lack of success, the effect of the movement upon the development of the region must not be disregarded. After several years of Indian wars and the depression due to the great Civil War, the condition of the country was such that some stimulus was required to restore it to its normal condition. This was achieved by the oil boom of 1865. A new spirit of optimism had been engendered, and while many of the recent arrivals departed, large numbers of the oil seekers remained to become permanent residents and to engage in other occupations.

The Mattole and Bear River regions were naturally the most affected by this movement, and, as has already been noted, the town of Petrolia had its beginning at this time.⁴² The election returns, in so far as they may be taken as an indication of changes in population, show a marked increase at this time. There had been a noticeable decline in this district after 1861, so that in the presidential election of 1864 there were but twenty-six votes cast at Lower Mattole, seven at Upper Mattole, and four at Bear River; during the state and county election of 1865, however, there were one hundred and twenty-four votes cast at Lower Mattole, twenty-one at Upper Mattole, and thirty-two at Bear River.⁴³

The growth in population led to many other demands. This was especially true in the case of building materials,

³⁷ *Humboldt Times*, July 7, Aug. 25, 1866.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, May 12, Sept. 15, 1866.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 22, 1866.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 10, 1866.

⁴¹ California Surveyor general, *Report* 1865-1867: 99; Eureka, *Northern Independent*, Apr. 27, 1871; *Alta California*, Mar. 7, 1867.

⁴² *Ante*, 231.

⁴³ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 19, 1864; Sept. 16, 1865.

for both lumber and shingles were scarce in the Mattole region. The sawmill which had been established some years before was now equipped with steam power, and in addition to this, a brickyard was also opened.⁴⁴ Demands for improved transportation facilities became more frequent.⁴⁵ The coast here was so rugged and inhospitable that efforts to secure a landing were unsuccessful,⁴⁶ and one company was incorporated for the purpose of constructing a road between Eel River and Mattole,⁴⁷ while another was formed to build a railroad from Humboldt Bay across Eel River to Centerville.⁴⁸

⁴⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 19, 1865.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, June 11, July 30, 1864; June 10, 1865.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Aug. 19, 1865.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, July 15, Aug. 19, Sept. 30, 1865.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1865; *Infra*, 287-288.

CHAPTER XV

THE FURTHER SPREAD OF SETTLEMENT

The oil excitement had without doubt furnished a decided stimulus to immigration, yet it is fortunate for the region that it possessed other resources of value to which the new settlers could turn their attention when it became apparent that the oil fields were doomed to failure. Agriculture, stock-raising, and lumber all presented abundant opportunities to the industrious settler, and while not so alluring as the dreams of wealth from oil they were, nevertheless, more certain in their returns.

Extension of the United States Surveys. The Indian wars had caused much of the back country to be deserted by the settlers, but with the return of peaceful conditions, these farms were again occupied and many others taken up around them. The new districts then in demand are best understood by studying those parts of the public lands opened up by the United States surveyors. By 1868 the townships nearer the bay had been surveyed into sections, the more recent surveys being on Salmon and Freshwater creeks and Eel River above Rio Dell, while Trinidad was also for the first time included in the surveyed district.¹ Between 1868 and 1872 other minor surveys followed; but after this latter date the operations of the surveyors became much more extensive, and included valuable grazing lands in the Bald Hills along the eastern border of the county.² By 1875, with the exception of mountainous or fractional townships, practically all the area within the Humboldt Bay region had been surveyed. In many places the pioneer settlers had preceded the surveyor, but in other cases they followed into the lands thus opened up. At all times, however, the full title to the land could not be secured until after the surveyor had made his report to the General Land Office.

¹ These recent surveys included the whole or a part of townships 3 N., 1 W.; 4 N., 1 E.; 1 N., 1 E.; 8 N., 1 W.; and 8 N., 1 E. General Land Office, *Annual Report*, 1866: 128; 1868: 413.

² General Land Office, *Annual Report*, 1873: 176, 196; 1876: 356.

Federal Land Policy. During the years following the passage of the Homestead Act of 1862 no great change was made in the policy of the federal government in disposing of the public domain. In the interest of better administration or to extend the privilege of homestead entries several amendments were made to the original acts, but these are of no great importance to our study.³ Three methods were employed by the federal government during this period in disposing of the public lands. These were through public sale, by preemption or by homestead. The reports do not differentiate between the first two classes, but show all sales either as cash sales or homestead entries. During the decade following 1865 the cash sales in California amounted to 4,280,941.22 acres.⁴ The three years from 1868 to 1870 ran far above the average, due without doubt to the wild spirit of speculation so prevalent at that time. In the year 1869 the cash sales amounted to 1,726,794.39 acres, by far the greatest of any year.⁵ In the Humboldt District 335,472.84 acres were disposed of in this manner during the same decade.⁶ The homestead entries within the state during these years amounted to 1,233,726.60 acres,⁷ of which 453,892.14 acres were located in the Humboldt District.

The State Land System. Following the act of Congress establishing for the State of California full title to lands bestowed by earlier grants, the state legislature once again revised its land system in an act passed March 28, 1868.⁸ By this act the duties and powers of the state land officers were defined in harmony with the provisions of the federal statute. The swamp and overflowed lands, as well as salt marsh and tidelands, were to be placed on sale at one dollar per acre. This was to be paid in gold coin, but only twenty per cent was required as cash payment.⁹ School lands were to be sold for one dollar and a quarter per acre, under terms similar to those governing the sale of swamp lands. In the

³ Donaldson, *Public Domain*, 349-350; *Revised Statutes of United States*, 1873-1874: 421-426, gives the law at that date with citations to amended sections.

⁴ Report to Hon. George Stoneman, governor of California, on certain claims of the State of California against the United States . . . by John Mullen, agent and counsel. In Appendix to the *Journals of the Senate and Assembly*, 27 sess. VIII, Doc. 3, p. 63.

⁵ See ante, 239, n. 4.

⁶ General Land Office, *Annual Reports*, passim.

⁷ Donaldson, *Public domain*, 351-355.

⁸ *Statutes of California*, 1867-1868: 507-530.

⁹ The remainder was not due until one year after the passage of an act requiring its payment. This section also provided for the formation of reclamation districts, which if successfully accomplished within three years entitled the parties to full title.

case of the school lands in the sixteenth and thirty-sixth sections of each township, no person was to be allowed to purchase more than three hundred and twenty acres.¹⁰

After the passage of this law the sale of state lands went on at a steady pace. The demand by the state that all payments be made in gold coin, rather than the legal tender notes accepted by the General Land Office, threw the advantage for a while to the federal government. On the other hand, the credit system permitted under the state law proved a strong inducement to purchasers at a time when speculation was so rife as it was at this period.¹¹ As a result practically all desirable lands were purchased as soon as they were placed upon the market, including the swamp lands, which required reclamation, and also some of the semiarid lands, which demanded irrigation.¹²

The swamp and overflowed lands and the salt marsh and tidelands claimed a large share of the attention of the state land office. After the difficulty regarding the title to these lands had been adjusted in 1866, the demand for them increased greatly, 562,503.31 acres being sold during the years 1866 and 1867.¹³ Two years of speculation coupled with one or two dry years completely exhausted the supply of these lands then available.¹⁴ In Humboldt County 3575.08 acres were sold during the biennium 1873-75.¹⁵ The salt marsh and tidelands are frequently grouped with the swamp and overflowed lands, for the purpose of reclamation

¹⁰ Other miscellaneous provisions were enacted in the fourth part of the statute.

¹¹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1871-1873: 6.

¹² California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1873-1875: 19-20. The grant of 500,000 acres had long been sold except for a small part reserved for unlocated warrants, and the 72 sections for a university and 10 sections for public buildings had been entirely sold. *Ibid.*, 6, 9. The more recent grant of 150,000 acres of agricultural college lands had been placed on sale by the regents of the university in 1868 at \$5.00 per acre. By June, 1875, the sales amounted to 92,397.30 acres, and applications on file more than covered the remainder. University of California, *Reports of Regents*, 1868-1875. During the hard times following the panic of 1873 much of the land purchased on credit and for speculation purposes was forfeited, and the matter of limiting sales to actual settlers was considered by the state land officers. California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1873-1875: 6-8.

¹³ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1865: 114; 1865-1867: 36, 38; and for earlier dates. These figures were computed by deducting the total sales in 1865 from the total in 1867. During the years from 1862 to 1865, inclusive, the sales had not exceeded 40,000 acres in any year excepting the dry year of 1864, when 65,937.21 acres were sold.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1867-1869: 7; 1869-1871: 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1873-1875: 9-11. The statistics by counties are not given regularly, but show that 9919 acres had been sold in Humboldt up to 1862, *ibid.*, 1862: 41; 2016.76 acres from December, 1867, to December, 1871, in *Appendix to Journals of Senate and Assembly*, 19 sess., 11, Doc. 6, p. 61; and only 637.51 acres in 1871-1873, California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1871-1873: 11. In 1875 there was one reclamation district of 174.93 acres reported in the county, *ibid.*, 1873-1875: 14-15.

and sale.¹⁶ Of this class of lands 16,259.90 acres had been sold to December, 1867, and 6718.18 more during the years 1872-75.¹⁷ On Humboldt Bay 1224.46 acres were sold during the years 1872-73.¹⁸ In 1875 much more land on Humboldt and San Francisco bays awaited reclamation, but owing to a recent decision of the courts that the state could not sell the title to the beach between high and low water, the demand for this land was greatly reduced.¹⁹

New Townships and Election Precincts. The districts of the Humboldt region occupied by settlers during this period are indicated by the United States surveys, as already stated, but this expansion is even more clearly shown in the history of the creation of new political subdivisions, such as township and voting precincts. In 1853, at the time of the organization of Humboldt County, there were within its limits seven townships, viz., Union, Eureka, Bucksport, Table Bluff, Eel River, Pacific, and South Fork (of the Trinity). Each township was at that time a single election precinct.²⁰ South Fork Township was soon afterward abolished, but in 1859 the number was again raised to seven by the formation of the Mattole Township, which included all the territory south of the Humboldt base line and west of Eel River.²¹

Thus in 1865 there were still the same number of townships as in 1853; but meanwhile the number of voting places had increased, especially in the southern portion of the county, there being three in Mattole, four in Eel River, and three in Pacific Township.²² During the next few years the development of the back country east of Iaqua called for the reorganization of that region, and as a consequence an effort was made to set off the eastern portion of Bucksport and Eel River townships into a new "Bald Hills Township."

¹⁶ They were held by the state by virtue of her sovereignty rather than by a federal grant.

¹⁷ Figures are not available for 1868-1871.

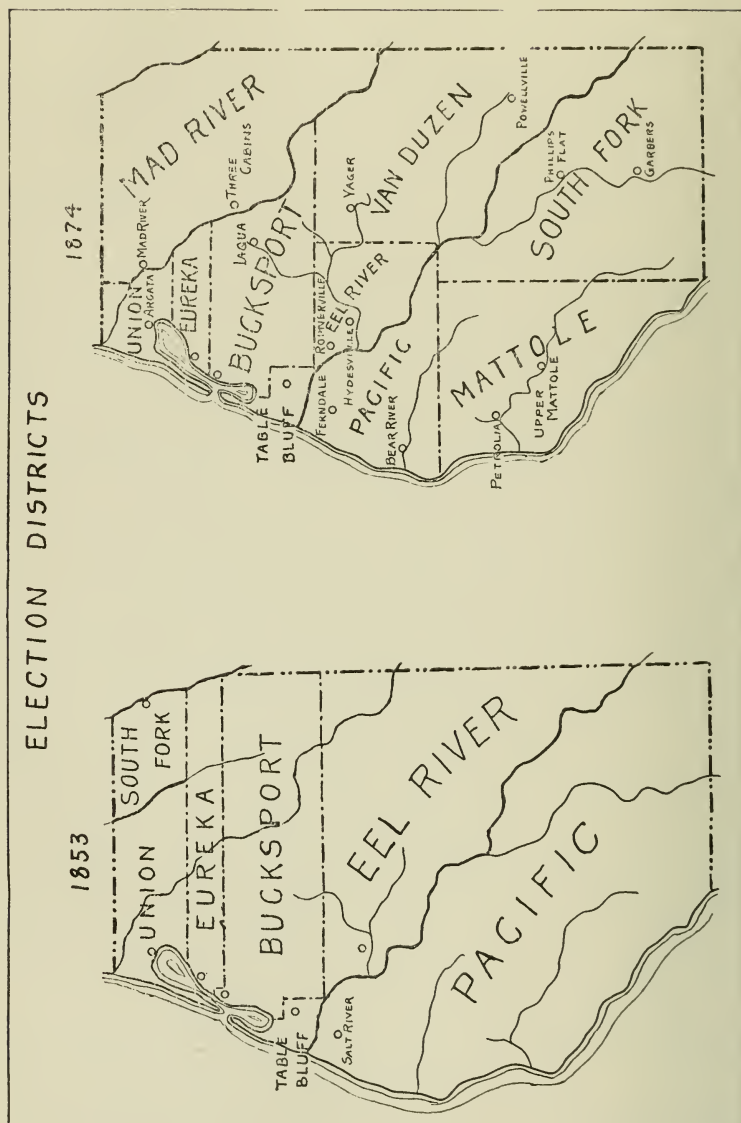
¹⁸ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1871-1873: 19.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 1873-1875: 17-18.

²⁰ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of the Board of Supervisors*, A, 5-7, Aug. 8, 1853. South Fork Township, which included that part north and east of Redwood Creek, was abolished in 1855. After that date, Union, Eureka, and Bucksport townships extended completely across the county from west to east; Table Bluff was limited to its present size, while Eel River and Pacific townships took in all the remainder of the county, the former including all east and north of that river, and the latter all south and west of it. See map, *infra*, 242.

²¹ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of the Board of Supervisors*, A, 225, Aug., 1859. The eastern boundary was soon afterward moved farther west, again placing South Fork in Pacific Township.

²² *Ibid.*, B, 309-310.



For some reason this was unsatisfactory, however, and the action was soon rescinded.²³ During the next year, 1868, a different division was made, and a new township, named "South Fork," was created from the territory lying south of the Humboldt base line and east of Mattole Township.²⁴ The growth of population in the eastern portion of the county required still further modification of boundaries, and to meet this requirement two new townships were created in 1871. These were the Mad River and Van Duzen townships, the former including practically all that portion of the county lying east of Mad River, the latter the Bald Hills in the eastern portion of the old Eel River Township.²⁵ These ten townships, with a few modifications of boundaries, have remained the same for over five decades. The annexation of a portion of Klamath County in 1875 added four additional townships,

Following the adoption of the registry act of 1865 the townships were further subdivided into election precincts having definite boundaries.²⁶ A study of the number of votes polled in each of these precincts provides a basis by which to determine the relative distribution of the population. In the state election of 1875 the results were as follows: Arcata, the only voting precinct in Union Township, polled 265 votes for governor; in the Mad River Township 48 votes were cast, 33 at Mad River Precinct, and 15 at Three Cabins; Eureka, 456 votes; Bucksport, 74 votes, of which 52 were polled on the bay, the other 22 being voted at Iaqua; Table Bluff, 83 votes; Eel River, a total of 236 votes, 177 of them from Rohnerville and 59 from Hydesville; Van Duzen, 69 votes, of which 34 were from Yager Creek and 35 from Powellville, or Blocksburg; in South Fork Township 73 votes were cast, 57 being at South Fork (Garberville) and the other 16 at Camp Grant; Pacific Township totaled 245 votes, Ferndale reporting 216 and Bear River 29; in the Mattole Township Petrolia polled 76 votes and Upper Mattole 24, making a total of 100 votes. The territory annexed from Klamath County during the year included six precincts, and added a total of 170 votes divided as follows: Trinidad, 92; Orleans,

²³ *Ibid.*, B, 415-416; 422-423.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, C, 63. Since 1867 the eastern boundary of Mattole township had been on a line six miles east of the Humboldt meridian. *Ibid.*, B, 422-423.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, C, 337-340. See map, *infra*, 242.

²⁶ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of the Board of Supervisors*, B, 376.

29; Martin's Ferry, 18; Willow Creek, 21; Bald Hills, 10; and no returns from Gold Bluffs.²⁷

Development of the Towns of the Region, 1865-1875. At the same time that the outlying districts were being taken up by stockmen and agriculturists, the older towns nearer the bay were growing in importance, and many other places formerly mere rural settlements were now rising to the rank of towns.

Eureka. During these years Eureka was steadily advancing, and, by reason of its commercial and industrial advantages, coming to be looked upon more and more as the metropolis of the whole region. The original limits had become too small for the increased population, and a new district at its southern edge, known as Clark's Addition, was surveyed into town lots and placed on sale.²⁸ Building went on rapidly, for both dwelling houses and business property were in demand.²⁹ The Vance House and Young Ladies' Seminary, erected in 1872, were among the most important of the structures.³⁰ In addition to these buildings there were many other kinds of improvements, all of which began to give Eureka the appearance of a city. The streets were much improved, sidewalks were built,³¹ the Eureka Water Works established,³² also gas works, with street illumination,³³ and the Humboldt County Bank, the first banking institution in the Humboldt Bay region, was organized.³⁴ The addition of a second fire engine in 1873 afforded better fire protection.³⁵ All lines of business were developing rapidly, and the increase in population was steady.³⁶

Arcata. The other towns around the bay, which in their earlier years had been successful rivals of Eureka, did not share equally in this prosperity. Arcata, the only one of

²⁷ Co. Clerk, *Minutes of Bd. of Supv.*, E. 22; *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 18, 1875.

²⁸ *Humboldt Times*, July 14, 1866; May 8, 1872.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, 1868; Oct. 29, 1870.

³⁰ *West Coast Signal*, May 11, 1872; *Humboldt Times*, June 29, July 27, 1872.

³¹ In 1872-1873, Fifth Street was opened from K to the county road (Myrtle Avenue), *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 24, 1872; Jan. 11, 1873. In 1875 Seventh Street was also opened from B to the county road, and sidewalks laid on F Street from Fifth to Ninth, and on Sixth and Seventh Streets from B to K, *ibid.*, Apr. 10, 1875.

³² By John Vance, *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 28, 1871.

³³ By the Maxim Gas Co., J. W. Henderson, president. *Ibid.*, May 18, 1872; *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 27, Apr. 3, June 5, 1872; Jan. 30, Feb. 27, Apr. 10, 1875.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 20, Mar. 5, 19, Apr. 16, 1873. It was located in the new Vance House.

³⁵ *West Coast Signal*, July, 1873.

³⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 25, 1869; Oct. 9, Dec. 4, 1875; *Northern Independent*, Mar. 31, 1870.

these towns yet remaining, did not attract a great deal of attention during this period, a movement even being on foot in 1870 to disincorporate the town.³⁷ The cause of this decline was the decrease in trade with the mines. Rich agricultural and dairy lands, however, lay on both sides of the town, and these, together with the lumber industry near at hand, afforded new avenues of activity.³⁸

Trinidad. Of Trinidad, the pioneer town of the region, little can be said. Its early days of activity had long since passed. Having little agricultural land the chief energies of Trinidad were devoted to the development of the lumber industry. This began almost simultaneously with the founding of the town and has been practically continuous until a recent date. In 1875 it had two mills, under the control of the Trinidad Mill Company. They employed about two hundred men, and furnished the chief industrial and commercial life of the place.³⁹ The steamer *Newport* carried this lumber to other ports and in return brought passengers and freight from San Francisco. The population in 1875 was probably between three and four hundred.⁴⁰

South Bay Towns. At the southern end of Humboldt Bay there was much business activity where Hookton and Myer's Landing competed for the trade between the bay and Eel River Valley. Since navigation over Eel River had never proved practical and as the settlements there were not yet connected with Eureka by railway, the cheapest and most convenient means of transporting products from Eel River Valley was across Table Bluff to the wharves at the lower end of the bay. The business done at these two places was therefore extensive.⁴¹

Eel River Valley. In the Eel River Valley the two more important towns were Hydesville and its rival, Eel River, or Rohnerville. The importance of the former was due to its location at the junction of the wagon road with the various trails leading to the Bald Hills, Trinity and Mendocino, and

³⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 19, 1870.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, November and December, 1869, correspondence signed "Rebuke" gives letters from Arcata.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, May 8, 1869; Jan. 2, 1875; Jan. 15, 1876.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 18, Aug. 21, 1875.

⁴¹ *West Coast Signal*, Dec. 16, 1871, says in a semi-humorous vein: "Hookton is the potato outlet from Eel River and bids fair to rival San Francisco in importance." *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 4, 1871; June 11, 1873; Jan. 29, 1876.

also to the fact that it was in the center of a good agricultural district. In addition to general agriculture there was located here an establishment for preparing bacon and hams for shipment. During one season more than one hundred tons of cured pork were shipped to the San Francisco market. The supply for this business came largely from the Bald Hills, with which an extensive trade was carried on, sometimes as many as a hundred pack mules leaving Hydesville in one day. A school of sixty or seventy pupils was maintained here and the various religious denominations held services.⁴²

Rohnerville, or Eel River, was supported largely by its agricultural interests, but in addition had a saw mill and a flour mill. The former had a capacity of 25,000 feet of lumber a day, which was shipped directly to San Francisco. The flour mill ground only enough flour to supply the regular local demand. The town is described in 1870 as "a wide awake and thriving little village," with two merchandise stores and one drug store, two hotels, three blacksmith shops, a cabinet maker, a carriage maker, and a cooper. School was regularly maintained eight months in the year, and there were three church organizations. The population at that time was about two hundred and fifty, which placed it third in rank among the towns of the county.⁴³

Salt River and Ferndale. The lower portion of the Eel River Valley on its southern side, known as Salt River or the Island,⁴⁴ was developing rapidly, as was also the Ferndale region. During the oil excitement in the districts farther south the old town of Centerville, located on the main trail to Bear River, was also for a time aroused to new life. A large livery stable and a general merchandise store were opened there,⁴⁵ and a movement was started for the construction of a railroad thither from Humboldt Bay in order to accommodate traffic with the oil regions.⁴⁶ On Eel River, at Dungan's Ferry, a settlement at which Bearding & Loheide ran a general merchandise store aspired to become a town

⁴² *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 26, 1870.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 19, 1870. See also May 12, 1866; Feb. 26, 1875. The name of the post office was changed from "Eel River" to "Rohnerville" in 1874, *ibid.*, Apr. 18, 1874.

⁴⁴ Also as Pacific election precinct.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Sept. 23, 1865.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Aug. 5, 1865. According to the report the stock was already subscribed and an engineer employed to estimate the cost of construction. Eel River was to be crossed by means of a ferry.

with a post office under the name of "Cleveland," but was doomed to disappointment.⁴⁷

Ferndale, the only town in this district to rise to any importance, was developing steadily. In 1871 it had two stores, two hotels, two blacksmith shops, a tinshop, and a wheelwright, besides an express and post office. It also had a school and churches. The surrounding lands were found to be very valuable in producing potatoes and were the chief support of the place.⁴⁸

Mattole. The early development of the Mattole region, together with the establishment of Petrolia during the oil boom, has been considered elsewhere.⁴⁹ The failure of the oil projects naturally were most severely felt in this part of the country, and yet, in so far as can be seen, there was no great reaction due to this failure. As has been stated, many of the recent arrivals left the region, but others remained and with the earlier settlers turned to other pursuits. By 1875 the whole of the valley was filled with large farms and cattle ranches. Petrolia by that time had two general stores, two blacksmith shops, a livery stable, a butcher, a carpenter, and a cooper. It had a church building and four ministers, a two-story schoolhouse, a telegraph and post office.⁵⁰

Other Towns. In addition to the places already mentioned there were along the upper courses of the rivers and throughout the Bald Hills many small communities that were developing into towns. One of these was on Mad River, at the terminus of the wagon road, about eight miles from Arcata. Here there was a small settlement with a blacksmith shop, schoolhouse, and hotel, the latter run by Scott, who divided his attention between his hotel and his ranch adjoining. In later years this grew into the town of Blue Lake.⁵¹ In the Bald Hills and on the upper Eel River many other such settlements were developing at Yager Creek, Powellville, or Blockburger's, Garber's, and Phillip's Flat.

Number and Sources of the Population. In estimating the population of the various portions of the region reliance has

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Apr. 14, June 2, 1866.

⁴⁸ *Northern Independent*, Feb. 2, 1871.

⁴⁹ *Ante*, 231, 236.

⁵⁰ *Humboldt Times*, May 15, 1875; also July 18, Aug. 15, 1868; Aug. 28, 1869; *Northern Independent*, Feb. 23, Mar. 9, 1871.

⁵¹ *Northern Independent*, Aug. 25, 1870.

been placed in many cases upon figures which are of value only in a comparison of districts or as an approximation to the total population. Fortunately, however, the ninth federal census, taken in 1870, gives unassailable statistics upon which to base conclusions. According to these returns there were in that year within the territory of Humboldt County a total of 6140 people, not including undomesticated Indians. Of this number, 4646 were natives and 1494 foreign-born.⁵² This population was distributed among the various townships as follows: Arcata (formerly Union), 924; Eureka, 2049; Bucksport, 388; Table Bluff, 408; Eel River, 827; Pacific, 818; Mattole, 453; and South Fork, 273.⁵³

In an earlier chapter an analysis was made of the various elements of the population as shown in the original census return of 1860.⁵⁴ Fortunately, additional information is at hand for subsequent years whereby these conclusions may be tested and expanded. The first and most comprehensive of these sources of information is the report of the ninth census, which gives the place of nativity of both the foreign and the native-born inhabitants.⁵⁵ This report shows that there were 1494 foreign-born residents in Humboldt County in 1870; of these 548 were born in British America, 380 came from Ireland, 180 from England and Wales, and 51 from Scotland. Germany was represented by 138 and Scandinavia by 41, while other countries furnished smaller quotas. The large proportion from English-speaking countries is at once apparent, since they amounted to more than 70 per cent of the total.

From other available authorities it may be shown that these generalizations apply to the whole period from 1865 to 1875. A study of the record of aliens who acquired American citizenship in the county between the years 1870 and 1880,⁵⁶ reveals the interesting fact that of a total of 641 enrolled, 458, or 71 per cent, were former subjects of the British sovereign; 164 of these were from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia,⁵⁷ 132 from Ireland, and the remainder

⁵² United States, *Ninth Census, 1870, Population* (Serial 1473), 347.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁵⁴ *Ante*, 107-110.

⁵⁵ United States, *Ninth Census, 1870, Population* (Serial 1473), 347. Unfortunately the report gives only certain selected countries and states, but since they are the most typical examples for the state as a whole they apply well in this county also.

⁵⁶ The later dates have been chosen to allow for the five years of residence before taking out the final papers.

⁵⁷ With 77 more from Canada.

from England, Scotland, and the other colonies. There were 74 Germans, 14 Frenchmen and 29 from other countries.⁵⁸ In a similar manner the Great Register of voters gives information on this point for the years 1866 to 1875. There were, according to this record, 832 foreign-born voters in Humboldt County during these years. Of this number 585, or 70 per cent, were from the British possessions, Ireland furnishing 26 per cent and British America 25 per cent. The German states supplied 142; Scandinavia 62; Switzerland 18; France 16; and the other states 9 in all.⁵⁹

The uniformity of these figures taken from such widely independent sources impresses one almost to the point of monotony. From all it is evident that approximately 70 per cent of the foreign-born element were natives of England or her possessions, and that the Irish and British Americans furnished each about 25 per cent of the whole number. Next after the English-speaking countries was Germany with a proportion ranging between 9 and 17 per cent, Scandinavia between 7 and 10 per cent and the other countries in smaller ratios.

The large percentage of Irish is not surprising in view of the numbers of these peoples scattered throughout the United States; but the presence of so many from British America, especially New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, immediately raises the problem of the connection between their migration hither and the lumber industry, a subject which has been alluded to in an earlier chapter.⁶⁰ Fortunately the Great Register again furnishes valuable data on this question. During the years from 1866 to 1875 the register shows that 321 voters gave their occupations as directly connected with the lumber business. Of this number 199, or 62 per cent, were natives of the United States, and 122 were from other countries. Of the latter 60 per cent came directly from the British American provinces, especially New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.⁶¹

Regarding the nativity of persons born within the United States the information is less definite. The census report

⁵⁸ Archives of Humboldt County Clerk, *Index to Naturalized Citizens*.

⁵⁹ Italy 3, and Russia, Holland, and Spanish America each 2.

⁶⁰ *Ante*, 109-110.

⁶¹ Archives of Humboldt County Clerk, *Great Register*, 1866-1875.

shows that there were 4646 native-born residents in Humboldt in 1870. It then proceeds to specify the numbers from six different states, including California itself.⁶² This list includes 3170 persons, about 68 per cent of the total native-born population. Of this number 1974 were natives of California, 354 were from Maine, 323 from New York, 217 from Ohio, 182 from Missouri, and 120 from Massachusetts.⁶³ As in the case of the foreign-born population, it would appear that the lumber business had its effect upon this immigration as well. Unfortunately, the Great Register often fails to give the state of origin of native-born voters yet the data upon the question is sufficient to justify some conclusions. Of 199 native-born voters who were engaged in the lumber business the native states of 123 are given in the records. Of this number 90 were from Maine. If this number from the state of Maine be added to the lumbermen from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, it will be found that the eastern lumber-producing district furnished nearly one-half of the men engaged in that occupation along this portion of the Pacific Coast.

⁶² These states are selected as typical for the whole state of California, and may or may not be the best selection for this one county.

⁶³ United States, *Ninth Census*, 1870, *Population* (Serial 1473), 347.

CHAPTER XVI

AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, 1865-1875

During the decade following the close of the Indian wars agriculture in the region around Humboldt Bay again advanced rapidly. An examination of the returns of the county assessor showing the land under cultivation each year demonstrates this very clearly; during these years the acreage cultivated increased from 9060 in 1865 to 19,000 in 1875. In like manner the number of acres enclosed increased from 22,261 to 80,000 during the same period.¹

Hay and Grains. One of the important branches of agriculture was the raising of hay and grains. During this period the production of hay increased from 2014 tons in 1865 to 9000 tons in 1875, and the grain crops gained in like manner. The leading cereal was oats, the reports showing that 2803 acres produced 115,720 bushels in 1865, while ten years later 5640 acres produced 272,000 bushels. Similarly, wheat increased from 20,409 bushels in 1865 to 54,000 bushels in 1875, and barley from 9232 to 33,600 bushels during the same time. From 8000 to 10,000 bushels of corn were raised each year, and buckwheat and rye were grown in small amounts.² Flax also promised good returns.³

Flour and Grist Mills. Wheat and the other grains were not only raised in the region, but an attempt was made to convert these cereals into flour and meal. The grinding of grist and flour had been one of the first industries to be tried in the region.⁴ Its development had not kept pace with other lines of activity, however, for, notwithstanding the fact that those interested in the business proclaimed the superiority of their product, it was a fact that Humboldt wheat was not entirely adapted to making flour. There were, according to the report of the assessor, five flour mills in Humboldt County in 1865. Two of these were operated by steam and the other three by water, the total annual

¹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1864-1865: 118; 1875-1877: 20.

² *Ibid.*, 1864-1865: 118-122; 1875-1877: 20, 22, 26.

³ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 5, 1870.

⁴ *Ante*, 113.

output being about 2500 barrels.⁵ Ten years later the total number of mills remained the same, but the amount of flour produced had increased to 6500 barrels, besides 1000 bushels of corn.⁶

In the meantime several of the earlier mills had been destroyed or closed and a number of new ones built. In 1868 a mill was opened by N. Patrick in Eel River Valley near Grizzly Bluff, the quality of the product being advertised as the "best of any in the state."⁷ During the year 1873 there was much interest in the region in home-manufactured flour, three mills being erected at this time. The first was built by Minor and Falk near their "Dolly Varden" sawmill. This was a three-story building covering a space thirty by forty feet.⁸ This mill ran for a short time but was discontinued because Humboldt wheat was found to be too sticky to make a good quality of flour.⁹ On the other hand, the flour produced by the Rohnerville mills was pronounced by some to be superior to any imported flour.¹⁰ In the Mattole region a new mill was erected during the summer of 1873.¹¹ One was built here as early as 1861, but had not been entirely successful.¹²

The Potato Crop. The most important agricultural product in Humboldt during this period was the potato crop, for during these ten years the acreage planted to potatoes was doubled. Humboldt potatoes were early discovered to be superior, and in the markets of the state brought a higher price than any other.¹³

During the later sixties the potato business received greater attention than formerly. In 1867 the crop amounted to 282,106 bushels and was estimated to be worth a quarter of a million dollars;¹⁴ the next year 738,428 bushels were produced, more than 171,045 sacks being exported to San

⁵ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1864-1865: 140-142. There are no statistics relative to the amount of flour produced in 1865. The output in 1866 was 2448 barrels. *Ibid.*, 1865-1867: 88.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1875-1877: 34.

⁷ *Humboldt Times*, June 27, 1868.

⁸ *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 19, 1873.

⁹ Minor, *Reminiscences*, MS.

¹⁰ *West Coast Signal*, June 18, 1873.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, July 2, 1873.

¹² *Humboldt Times*, May 25, 1861; Aug. 28, 1869. During August, Langdon's mill was reopened near Petrolia. It had been established in 1861. *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1868.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 24, 1866; Oct. 23, 1869; *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 22, 1871. The latter quotes report of *Alta California* stating that 1500 sacks of Humboldts sold at \$1.85 and \$1.87½; and 400 sacks of Petalumas at \$1.70 and \$1.75.

¹⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 30, 1867.

Francisco;¹⁵ while in 1870 the production reached 1,141,100 bushels.¹⁶ In describing the region visitors made mention of the great fields of potatoes,¹⁷ and Hookton, at the southern end of the bay, once again came into prominence as the "potato outlet from the Eel River Valley."¹⁸ In addition to the other varieties, the Early Rose made its first appearance during the year 1870.¹⁹ In 1871 a mechanical potato digger was patented and placed upon the market by Yocum and Walker, and this promised to save much labor in harvesting the crop.²⁰

The idea of cooperation among the potato growers in order to handle to better advantage the great amount of business and to remove the cause for complaints regarding occasional inferior shipments, was also recognized by many as an important move.²¹ This organization the potato growers as a whole did not succeed in effecting, but a few men in the county were accused of having formed a "potato ring" in order to control the business in their own interests.²²

By 1872 the crop had reached such proportions that the amount was reckoned in tons rather than in bushels. The yield for 1872 was 21,480 tons. In 1875 the high mark was reached with a production of 24,346 tons of potatoes,²³ the market value of the exports amounting to \$344,444.70.²⁴

Beet Growing. For a time the growing of beets offered great promise. Sixty-six tons of beets were raised in 1866, but by 1871 the production had increased to 315 tons. At this time the idea of raising sugar beets was quite popular, 410 tons of this variety being raised during the season of 1872-73.²⁵ It was also urged that a beet sugar factory be established on or near Humboldt Bay.²⁶ The promoters quoted authorities to show that the longer season in Humboldt would be of much advantage, and that while the beets

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Apr. 10, 1869.

¹⁶ During the year 1869 the crop fell 100,000 bushels below that of the previous year, yet Humboldt County maintained the lead, and produced about one-sixth of the crop of the whole state. *Northern Independent*, Jan. 19, 1871.

¹⁷ *West Coast Signal*, Nov. 15, 1871.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Dec. 6, 1871.

¹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 26, 1870.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 4, 1871.

²¹ *Ibid.*, May 28, 1870; Dec. 21, 1867; Feb. 27, 1869.

²² *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 1, 1871.

²³ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1875-1877: 25.

²⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 7, 1875. After this date the blight began to do much damage to the crop, and thereafter it did not maintain the importance of earlier years.

²⁵ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1871-1873: 32, 60; *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 20, Dec. 14, 1872.

²⁶ *West Coast Signal*, March and April, 1873.

raised here might produce less sugar they would be found superior in quantity of juice.²⁷ The results of the experiment with sugar beets, however, did not convince the farmers that they were a profitable crop, and they soon ceased to be a factor in the agricultural reports.²⁸

Peas and Other Products. In addition to potatoes and beets other agricultural products were raised on larger or smaller scale. The most important of these were peas. In 1865, 958 acres produced 31,147 bushels of peas.²⁹ From this time the increase was fairly regular, reaching 63,830 bushels in 1869-70 and 90,000 bushels in 1874-75. Unlike potatoes, the production of peas increased rapidly after 1875, evidently occupying the lands formerly planted to potatoes.³⁰ According to report, this increase was due to the fact that in addition to being used for hog feed, as formerly, they now found a market as split peas and as an adulterant for coffee and spices.³¹

Onions and turnips were also raised, but were not so important as the other products mentioned, the largest crop of each of these being in the year 1871, when 300 bushels of onions and 140 tons of turnips were reported.³² Beans were also raised but not so profitably as formerly. The largest acreage reported was during the year 1866, when 220 bushels were raised on twenty acres. Only eighteen sacks were exported during the year 1875.

Fruits. Of the different fruits, apples far outnumbered all the other varieties. In 1865 there were 37,249 trees; in 1870, 49,420; and in 1875, 65,840. During this latter year 1034 boxes of apples were exported by steamer and nearly twice that amount were sold within the county.³³ Pears also increased slightly during this decade, there being 1113 trees in 1865, and 2000 in 1875. The growing of peaches was attended with varying success. Early in the sixties a large number of these trees had been set out, but the climate near the bay was found to be ill-adapted to them, with the

²⁷ *West Coast Signal*, Oct. 15, 1873.

²⁸ During 1873-1874, 300 tons were raised. Beets next appear in 1879-1880, with 800 tons, followed the next year by only 22 tons. California Surveyor general, *Report*.

²⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 4, 1865.

³⁰ In 1876, 243,600 bushels; in 1879, 402,500 bushels.

³¹ *West Coast Signal*, Aug. 14, 1875.

³² *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 21, 1875.

³³ *Ibid.*, Aug. 21, 1875.

result that they were allowed to decline until in 1870 only 520 trees were reported within the county. However, with the pushing of settlements farther inland, especially up the Eel River Valley, there opened a new country better adapted to peach growing, and the number of trees again increased rapidly.³⁴ By 1872 there were 2000 trees and in 1875, 2500. Plums and cherries were much better suited to the coast climate, the former increasing from 1931 tons in 1865, to 3040 in 1875, and the latter from 824 trees in 1865, to 1640 in 1875. Several other varieties of fruits appear in lesser numbers, among these being 175 apricot, 150 quince, and 40 fig trees. Citrus fruits also had been tried, seven orange trees appearing in the reports of 1866, and three lemon trees in 1869. Of the nut trees the reports show 17 walnut in 1861, 65 in 1870, and 100 in 1875. In 1875 there were also 40 almond trees. Among the smaller fruits strawberries and raspberries were most abundant, although gooseberries were also plentiful. The latter reached their greatest popularity in 1866, when 5613 bushes were reported. For strawberries and raspberries the highest numbers were reported in 1868, these being 58,770 and 54,127, respectively.³⁵ Grapes, which had declined in importance, after their first trial in the early sixties,³⁶ once again became popular, the number of vines increasing from 500 in 1871 to 3335 the following year and 5000 vines in the year 1875. In his report for 1875 the county assessor estimated the valuation of the fruit crop in Humboldt County at \$20,000.

Cattle. The rise of the stock business during the fifties and the setback caused by the ravages of the Indian wars in the early sixties have been considered in earlier chapters.³⁷ It has also been noted that during the year 1865 the number of stock and beef cattle indicated that this business was once again becoming important.³⁸ During the years immediately following, on account of driving great herds to other portions of the state,³⁹ the numbers were again reduced, there being but 2835 head of beef cattle in the county in 1866, whereas

³⁴ *West Coast Signal*, Sept. 17, 1873.

³⁵ *Ante*, 215, n. 88. There are no reports for berries after 1870.

³⁶ *Ante*, 215.

³⁷ *Ante*, 114-116, 208-211.

³⁸ The reports for this year show 8549 head of stock and beef cattle. The number of cows and calves, however, was low, the total number of cattle being only 15,858 head. California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1865.

³⁹ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1865-1867: 99.

there had been more than 8500 the previous year, and a still further decrease is noted during the two following years. Other kinds of cattle, however, maintained their quota, so that the total number was not reduced in like ratio. During 1869 the number of cattle rose again from 15,000 to 21,412, and from that time increased rapidly until it reached 35,338 in 1871.

In addition to the consumption of beef within the Humboldt region a market was also developed in San Francisco. During the twelve months ending July 1, 1875, 426 quarter-beeves had been shipped from Humboldt Bay by steamer, being carried in cotton sacks on the hurricane deck of the vessel; 43 barrels of corned beef and a small amount of veal and smoked beef were also exported.⁴⁰ The hides and tallow produced were also quite important, \$10,314.50 worth of hides and 21,400 pounds of tallow being exported during the year, not including the great amount of tallow used in the mills located upon the bay. Butter and other dairy products were also recognized as valuable products. During the year 1875, 127,568 pounds of butter were shipped out of the county, in addition to the amount consumed locally. It was estimated at this time that the county could easily produce five hundred tons of butter a year.⁴¹

Sheep and Wool. Although the cattle business still maintained an important role, sheep raising became a rival enterprise. Before 1865 the number of sheep in the county had never been large,⁴² but for that year the assessor's report shows 2110. Following this the numbers were again reduced,⁴³ but rose rapidly in 1868 to 7527, and from then on to 37,477 in 1871; 73,148 in 1873; and 114,483 in 1875. This introduction of sheep in the cattle ranges was naturally looked upon with marked disfavor by the cattlemen. A meeting of protest was held in Mattole, and a resolution was adopted declaring that the ranges were unsuited to sheep and should be reserved for cattle and horses.⁴⁴

Much effort was made to secure a good breed of sheep, and blooded animals were early imported. In December,

⁴⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 2, 1875.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1875.

⁴² At no time did it exceed 600 except in 1858, when 1500 were reported. This, however, may have been an error, for in 1857 there were but 10, and in 1860 only 523.

⁴³ 1082 in 1866; and 1125 in 1867.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1869.

1871, R. M. Reas of Eel River Valley brought in several head,⁴⁵ and the following year high quality Spanish Merino sheep were imported by S. Brown of Rohnerville.⁴⁶ The wool raised in Humboldt was superior to the average product, having a larger fiber, and in consequence commanded a higher price in the markets of the state.⁴⁷

The year 1874 was a hard one on sheep because of the destruction wrought by "hoof disease." In Humboldt, however, the loss was very slight in comparison with that of other parts of the state.⁴⁸ During the year 1874-75, 5019 bales of wool were shipped to San Francisco, a large proportion being shipped from Hydesville and Hookton.⁴⁹ One hundred and nineteen bundles of sheep pelts, in addition to those tanned in Eureka,⁵⁰ and 2205 head of sheep were also exported to San Francisco.⁵¹

Hogs. Another item of importance was the raising of hogs, which were fattened in the valleys upon the crop of peas and other products, and in the hills upon roots and acorns. The highest number reported for any year during this decade was 10,467 in 1866, the average number running between 6000 and 8000. Some idea of the value of the trade in pork products may be formed from the report that during the year ending March 31, 1869, the shipment of bacon amounted to 100 tons, besides 4 tons of lard and 88 barrels of salt pork.⁵² In the reports for the year 1874-75 Samuels & Geer, who practically controlled the hog business around Humboldt Bay, are said to have shipped 2461 hogs to San Francisco. About 4000 additional head were consumed in the county or were driven over the mountains to Weaverville and the Trinity region. This shipment of hogs naturally reduced the supply of bacon and pork, yet \$2,065 worth of bacon and 151 half-barrels of salt pork were exported.⁵³

The number of draft animals in the county also steadily increased. In addition to those used at home fifty-seven

⁴⁵ *West Coast Signal*, Dec. 6, 1871.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1872; Apr. 23, 1873.

⁴⁷ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 134-135.

⁴⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 4, 1874. In some places losses as high as 35% were reported. The loss in Humboldt was about 1½%.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 7, 1875. Much of this was raised on the Bald Hills east of Hydesville. *Ibid.*, Feb. 26, 1870; June 26, 1875.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Sept. 4, 1872.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 21, 1875.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Apr. 10, 1869.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Aug. 21, 1875.

horses were shipped out by water during the year 1874-75, the price brought by one of the animals being \$2,000.⁵⁴

Poultry. Some mention might also be made of the poultry business. The value of the live fowls exported during the year 1874-75 is given in the reports at \$1,554, and the eggs at \$3,810.90.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 21, 1875.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1875.

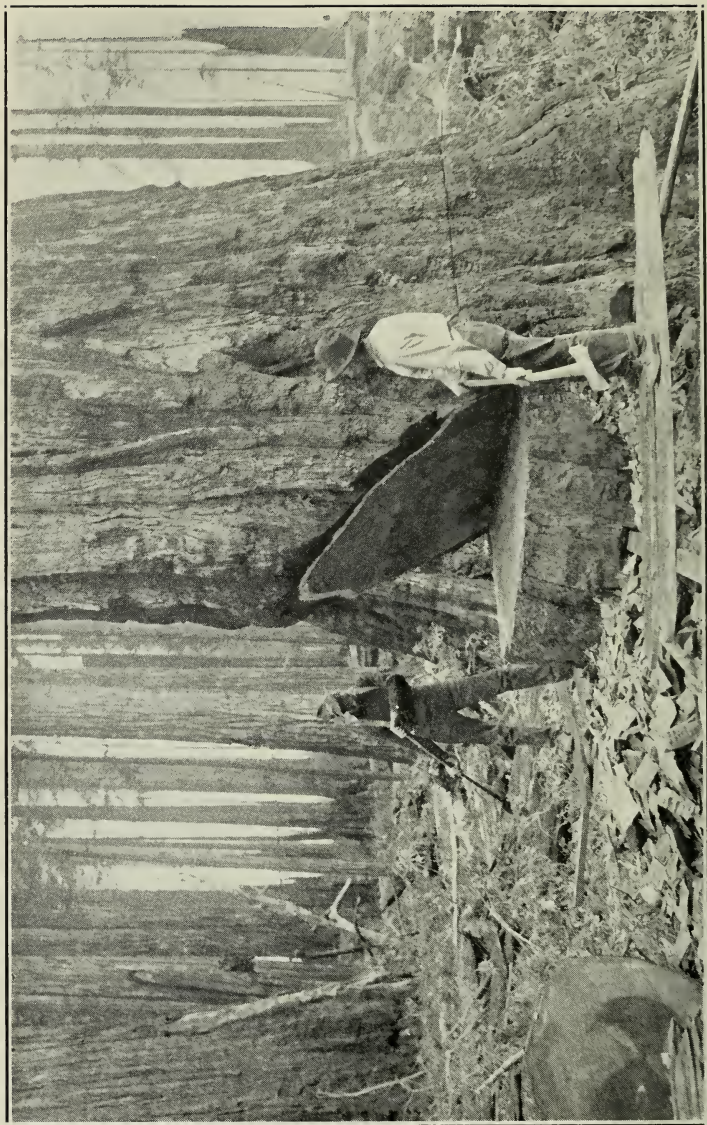


Photo by H. C. Tibbitts

FELLING A REDWOOD

CHAPTER XVII

LUMBER AND OTHER INDUSTRIES, 1865-1875

Although great progress had been made in the lumber business during the fifteen years preceding the decade covered in this chapter, the many reverses encountered prevented its highest development. It was seen that the financial stringency of 1854-55 retarded it at the very beginning, while later Indian troubles and the general financial depression caused by the Civil War prevented any great advance. In the period now being considered, however, uninterrupted progress was ushered in. Each year new mills were erected or old ones enlarged and repaired, so that the output increased rapidly year by year.

The first new mill to be erected during this period was built in Mattole in 1865 by Hill, Mann & Company, in response to the demand for a lumber mill in the new oil region.¹ During the next year mills were also projected on Indian Island, in Humboldt Bay, but it was not until 1867 that the first mill was built there, that of Kentfield, Buhne & Jones.² During that year the report of the assessor shows that the mills of Humboldt County had sawed 20,375-000 feet of lumber and 800,000 shingles.³

During the years 1868 and 1869, other new mills were constructed. J. R. Duff & Company at this time built one at Eureka, with a capacity of thirty thousand feet of lumber a day.⁴ Unfortunately, within a few months the mill was destroyed by fire at a loss of \$15,000.⁵ On Indian Island, just below the mill of Kentfield, Buhne & Jones, another mill was erected by Russ, Wood & Company in 1869.⁶ Smith and Dougherty also built a new mill at Trinidad, a place which by report was soon to be listed among the "important lumber manufacturing ports on the coast."⁷

¹ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 11, 1865.

² *Ibid.*, June 23, 1866; Nov. 23, 1867.

³ California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1867-1869: 34.

⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 18, 1868; *Northern Independent*, July 22, 1869.

⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 11, 18, 1868. It was in part at least almost immediately rebuilt.

⁶ *Ibid.*, May 22, 1869; *Northern Independent*, July 22, 1869.

⁷ *Humboldt Times*, May 8, 1869.

Eel River Valley also joined in the production of lumber, a large amount being shipped by Martin & Look from the Rohnerville mills.⁸

The extent of the lumber business may be judged in part from the exportations by some of the leading mills during the year preceding March 31, 1869. This report shows that the largest exporters were Kentfield, Buhne & Jones, who shipped 11,642,000 feet; next came John Vance with 8,020,000 feet; then Dolbeer & Carson with 7,688,000 feet; and J. R. Duff & Company with 3,631,000 feet.⁹ By these four large companies 30,981,000 feet of lumber and 3,163,000 shingles had been exported, which, of course, does not allow for shipments of smaller manufacturers nor for the home consumption of lumber.

Early in 1870 the Duff mill was rebuilt,¹⁰ and a new shingle mill was erected by Burke & Babcock on Salmon Creek.¹¹ This latter greatly increased the production of shingles, for Babcock was the inventor of a new shingle machine, two of which are reported to have cut 701,750 shingles in thirteen days of ten hours each.¹² Tramways or rude railroads had been used to bring logs to the sawmills in the early years; but now as cutting of timber proceeded farther and farther from the bay the feasibility of floating logs down the streams was considered, Elk and Mad rivers being the best suited for this purpose. Early in the season of 1870 a bill was introduced granting to lumbermen the right to construct and control such a log boom on Elk River. Much opposition was encountered from settlers along the river and the matter was indefinitely postponed.¹³ In 1872 another unsuccessful attempt was made to secure the passage of the act.¹⁴ For that year the production of lumber in the Eureka mills was reported as follows: Kentfield, Buhne & Jones, 10,500,000 feet; John Vance, 8,601,418 feet; Dolbeer & Carson, 8,600,000 feet; Russ, Wood & Company, 4,163,000

⁸ *Humboldt Times*, June 19, Oct. 30, 1869. This lumber was hauled by teams to Hookton and shipped from there.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 10, 1869.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 5, 1870.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, July 2, 1870.

¹² *Ibid.*, Jan. 8, Nov. 12, 1870.

¹³ *Northern Independent*, Jan. 27, 1870; *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 19, 1870.

¹⁴ *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 27, Apr. 10, 1872. The latter gives the full text of the bill. The matter was enacted into law in 1878 when Carson, Jones, Cousins, and others were given the privilege. *Statutes of California, 1877-1878*: 697-698.

feet; Evans & Company, 2,479,794 feet;¹⁵ and Duff & Company, 2,449,000 feet. Besides this lumber the Fay Brothers cut 9,000,000 shingles.¹⁶ In 1873 another shingle mill was built by the Howatt Brothers on the island between the two saw mills already there. With these three mills in operation the island, which had come to be known as Gunther's Island, was the scene of much industrial activity.¹⁷ During 1873 the lumber sawed amounted to 33,943,147 feet,¹⁸ and the following year the production had increased more than fourteen million feet, the output being 48,635,808 feet.¹⁹

The year 1875, which marks the close of the period covered in this study, was far in advance of any of the earlier years in the production of lumber. Several new mills were placed in operation, while many old ones were equipped with better machinery to increase their capacity. Early in the year the two mills at Trinidad were consolidated under the Hooper Brothers, and the facilities greatly improved.²⁰ Among the new mills was the "Big Bonanza," built by John Vance on the north side of Mad River. This mill was connected with Humboldt Bay by means of a railroad which crossed Mad River near its mouth.²¹ Near this mill were two others owned by Minor & Falk, known as the "Dolly Varden" and the "Jolly Giant." The latter was not far from Arcata, and first began to cut lumber on June 4, 1875.²² The capacity of these mills was not great, but they gave employment to about fifty men and cut an average of 45,000 feet of lumber a day.²³

There was also much industrial activity near the southern end of the bay. Evans & Company erected a mill on Salmon Creek during the year, and in addition to this the South Bay Railroad Company was organized, and built a road up this creek for the purpose of carrying out logs and lumber.²⁴ All of this new activity, together with the shingle mill already

¹⁵ Evans & Co. purchased the mill of Duff & Co. during the year, and gave it the name of Occidental Mill. *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 7, 1871.

¹⁶ *West Coast Signal*, Jan. 7, 1872. Some idea of the quality and size of the timber handled is gained from the statement that two logs cut by Dolbeer and Carson produced 11,000 feet of clear lumber, worth about \$250.00. The logs were 12 and 14 feet long and 8 and 9 feet through. *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1872.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, July 9, 1873; Gunther, *Autobiography*, MS.

¹⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 23, 1875; *West Coast Signal*, Jan. 7, 21, 1874.

¹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 23, 1875.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1875.

²¹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 20, Oct. 9, 1875; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 142-143.

²² Minor says July Fourth, in his *Reminiscences*, MS.

²³ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 10, June 5, Aug. 21, 1875.

²⁴ *Infra*, 288.

located there, tended to make that part of the bay a scene of much business life.²⁵ On the peninsula the Fay Brothers increased the capacity of their two shingle mills. One of these now employed sixteen men and put out 400,000 shingles a week; the other employed forty men with an output of 300,000 shingles each day.²⁶ In the Eel River Valley the Springville Mills were built during the year by Rohner & Company,²⁷ but, on the other hand, the number there was reduced by the loss of the Russ mill at Ferndale, which was destroyed by fire.²⁸

The production of lumber during 1875 exceeded that of the previous year by nearly 60 per cent, notwithstanding the fact that several of the mills did not run full time on account of shortage of logs and for other reasons. The total output of lumber cut during 1875 amounted to 77,689,608 feet,²⁹ apportioned among the various mills as follows: Buhne, Jones & Company in their two mills cut 16,085,000 feet of lumber, 273,266 pickets, 344,500 laths, and 87,261 feet of moulding; Dolbeer & Carson, 12,750,000 feet of lumber, 2,500,000 shingles, 518,275 shakes, and 15,000 posts; the Occidental Mill, 10,676,207 feet of lumber, 622,850 laths, 143,500 shakes, and 2102 posts; Russ, Pickard & Company, on Gunther's Island, 8,949,000 feet of lumber, 1,087,000 shingles, 257,725 shakes, and 20,516 posts. Vance's mills produced smaller amounts, the Eureka mill cutting 3,000,000 feet during five months, and the "Big Bonanza" 2,250,000 feet of lumber, 1,000,000 shingles, 275,000 shakes, and 20,000 posts during the nine months they were in operation.³⁰ During the few months that the Salmon Creek mill had been running it had cut about 2,000,000 feet, while the new Springville Mill of Rohner & Company produced 1,250,000 feet in its first three months. Martin, Kellogg & Company, at Rohnerville, cut 926,000 feet during the year. It was estimated that had all the mills run full time the output would not have been less than 100,000,000 feet, about twice that of the previous year.

²⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 4, 11, 1875.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Apr. 24, July 10, Sept. 18, 1875.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1876.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 6, 1875.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 8, 1876. In the earlier figures the Trinidad mills were not usually included, and some of the other smaller mills may have been omitted.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Jan. 15, 1876.

Shipbuilding. In the same manner that the lumber business flourished during this decade, so also did shipbuilding. Early in 1865 a small twenty-ton fishing schooner was launched by Captain Backus from the yard adjoining the Picayune Mill.³¹ Later in the year the *Ocean Express*, characterized as being unrivalled in symmetry, beauty, and excellence by any vessel built upon the coast, was launched from the Cousins' yards.³² In January of the next year the *Petrolia*, a lumber schooner, was completed by Chism & Tracy,³³ and later the *May Queen* by Cousins.³⁴

There was much activity in the shipyards, especially those of Cousins, during the years 1867 and 1868, some of the vessels built during these years being the *Dashing Wave*, a schooner one hundred and thirty feet in length with a beam of thirty feet;³⁵ a three-masted schooner built at the mill of Kentfield, Buhne & Jones on the Island;³⁶ and the *Western Bells*, built by Cousins.³⁷ Following this was the *Laura May*, built for service on the Sacramento River and elsewhere;³⁸ the *Gussie McAlpine*, a small steamer built by Mr. S. Daby for use on Humboldt Bay;³⁹ the *Luella*, a small schooner;⁴⁰ and two larger vessels, one the barkentine *Eureka* of 300 tons burthen,⁴¹ the other the brigantine *Nautilus*, launched by Cousins in November.⁴²

Beginning with the year 1869, the name Bendixsen appears among those engaged in shipbuilding on Humboldt Bay, the *Fairy Queen*, a small river schooner, being launched by McDonald & Bendixsen on the twenty-sixth of June,⁴³ followed soon afterward by another schooner for use in the coast trade.⁴⁴ In addition to these vessels, two other schooners were constructed, one by Cousins,⁴⁵ and the other the *Yankee Rover*, by Pearly & Fickle, at the Big Slough

³¹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1865.

³² *Ibid.*, Sept. 9, 1865.

³³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1866. A schooner, 90 tons capable of carrying 65,000 feet of lumber.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 28, Dec. 15, 1866.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, June 15, Sept. 14, 1867.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Oct. 26, 1867.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 23, 30, 1867.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Nov. 30, 1867; May 13, 1868.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 11, 1868.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, June 24, 1868.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 24, 1868, built by Murray on Gunther's Island.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1868.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, June 26, July 3, 1869. She was of 96 tons burthen.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 23, 1869, built for Kustel & Co., of San Francisco. It was 94 feet long, by 28-foot beam, and 8½ feet deep.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1869.

near Arcata.⁴⁶ The following year the small steamer *Silva* was built by Bendixsen.⁴⁷

The great amount of shipping and shipbuilding on Humboldt Bay suggested the need of a dry dock. In 1870 one was constructed by Duff, on the south side of Gunther's Island. It had a railroad 410 feet in length, with a carriage-way 125 feet long and 9½ feet wide, with riggers of 35 feet. Its capacity was 300 tons.⁴⁸ It was thus large enough to accommodate the vessels using Humboldt Bay,⁴⁹ and after its completion in October, 1870, was extensively used.⁵⁰

During the later part of this period business in the shipyards went on steadily, Bendixsen and Cousins being the two chief leaders in this activity. A list of vessels built by Bendixsen up to the end of 1875 contains no less than twenty-four names, the greater number of which were schooners, but including also two steamers, one brig, and a scow. Some were vessels of large size, such as the *Aurora*, which had a capacity of 275,000 feet of lumber, and the *Elvenia*, which carried 190,000 feet.⁵¹

These vessels were not only for local use upon the coast, but a number were constructed for use among the South Pacific Islands as well. The first of these was a schooner built by Cousins in 1870 for the local trade in the Society Islands,⁵² which was followed by ten vessels constructed by Bendixsen before 1875 for service in the Tahiti group.⁵³

The year 1875 was one of much activity in the Humboldt shipyards. At the opening of the year four vessels were under construction, two by Bendixsen and two by Cousins.⁵⁴ One of the latter was a schooner having a lumber-carrying capacity of 300,000 feet, the other a smaller vessel for the fur trade.⁵⁵ Among other vessels constructed during the year should be mentioned the schooners *La Gironde*, *Lottie Collins*, *Pauline Collins*,⁵⁶ and the *Mary E. Russ*.⁵⁷ Not

⁴⁶ *Humboldt Times*, June 19, 1869, a boat of about 75 tons.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 18, 1870; Feb. 11, 1871; *Northern Independent*, Mar. 2, 9, 1871.

⁴⁸ *West Coast Signal*, Jan. 10, 1872.

⁴⁹ *Humboldt Times*, June 25; Sept. 3, 1870.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Nov. 19, Dec. 17, 31, 1870; *West Coast Signal*, Nov. 12, 1871.

⁵¹ Chamber of Commerce, Eureka, *List of vessels built by Bendixsen Bros. & H. D. Bendixsen*, MS.

⁵² *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 9, 1870.

⁵³ Chamber of Commerce, Eureka, *List of vessels built by Bendixsen Bros. & H. D. Bendixsen*, MS., *Humboldt Times*, July 24, 1875.

⁵⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 16, Feb. 20, 1875.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Apr. 17, 1875.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, June 19, 1875.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, June 19, 26, 1875.

only were sailing vessels built in these shipyards but ocean-going steam vessels as well, one, the *Humboldt*, being built by Cutten & McDonald at the foot of K Street, on the Eureka side of the bay. It was 160 feet long, and carried fifty passengers, and 325 tons of freight.⁵⁸ In addition to the vessels built on the bay two schooners were built at Little River during the year.⁵⁹

Thus the shipbuilding industry had by 1875 become of no little importance, and the names of Cousins and Bendixsen had become known along this coast and in the South Pacific. Some difficulty was encountered in securing timbers of proper length and kind for certain purposes, and these were therefore shipped in from Puget Sound; but otherwise the industry was well supplied from the region around Humboldt Bay.⁶⁰

Fisheries. Notwithstanding the fact that the establishments engaged in the procuring and preservation of salmon were less numerous than in earlier years, this business was nevertheless of importance. The leading salmon fishery was maintained on Eel River by J. H. Dungan, who from the first had taken an important part in this industry. In 1875 the price of salmon was low, yet 4087 half-barrels, worth \$16,348, were shipped from Humboldt Bay.⁶¹ In addition to cured salmon much fish was exported in other ways, especially as fresh fish. During 1875, 377 cases of fish, worth \$4,901, were shipped to San Francisco. These were mostly salmon and flounders, although there were also herrings and sardines.

Shellfish were found profitable. Early in the fifties clams of a superior quality were discovered upon the shores of the bay. In 1854 L. K. Wood discovered a large quantity on his ranch near Union (Arcata) and offered them for sale at reasonable rates.⁶² Later the exportation of clams to San Francisco was carried on extensively, 31 sacks being shipped from Humboldt Bay in 1873, and 299 sacks during 1875, the latter being sold in San Francisco at two dollars a sack. There was then no thought of any danger of exhausting the

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 27, Apr. 17, Oct. 2, 9, 1875; Jan. 1, 1876. This must not be confused with the earlier steamer *Humboldt* which ran between San Francisco and Humboldt Bay in 1854-1855, nor with the schooner *Humboldt* built by Bendixsen in 1874.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, May 8, July 24, 1875.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Dec. 4, 1875.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 28, 1875.

⁶² *Ibid.*, Nov. 25, 1854.

supply of clams, for the whole bay appeared to be "very populous with them."⁶³ That oysters might also be cultivated in the bay was suggested by its apparent adaptability to clams, but no attempt was made until much later to plant them there.⁶⁴

Other Industries. In addition to the industries already mentioned there were others of less importance which are yet worthy of notice. So many lumber mills and other establishments made it necessary that there should also be a foundry. In 1861 C. A. Powers, engineer of the Eureka Mill, announced his intention of establishing a foundry, which he did the following year, locating it on Front Street, near his mill.⁶⁵ This was followed in August, 1869, by the Eureka Foundry, established by Asa Persons & Company.⁶⁶

The raising of cattle and sheep led to the development of industries dealing with hides, wool, and other animal products. By 1875 there were two tanneries, one at Eureka, the other at Arcata. These manufactured a large part of the leather used in the region, and during the year also exported about \$6,400 worth to San Francisco.⁶⁷ A soap and glove factory had been established in Eureka during the year 1873.⁶⁸ The large quantities of excellent wool exported each year suggested the erection of a woolen mill somewhere on the bay or in the Eel River Valley. In accordance with this proposition a company known as the Humboldt Bay Woolen Mills was organized at a meeting held in Eureka, May 9, 1874.⁶⁹

⁶³ *West Coast Signal*, Sept. 10, 1873; *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 4, 1875.

⁶⁴ *West Coast Signal*, Apr. 26, 1871.

⁶⁵ *Humboldt Times*, May 18, 1861; May 3, 1862.

⁶⁶ *Northern Independent*, Aug. 5, 1869.

⁶⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 28, 1875.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 12, 1873.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, May 9, 16, 1874; Mar. 6, Aug. 7, 1875. In addition to these industries there were also two breweries in the county in 1874, with an output of 20,000 gallons. The chief of these was the Humboldt Brewery established in 1865. *Ibid.*, Sept. 2, 1865; California Surveyor general, *Report*, 1873-1875: 62.

CHAPTER XVIII

MARITIME COMMERCE, 1865-1875

Because the only practical means of transportation between the Humboldt region and the remainder of the state was by sea, the development of this line of commerce followed closely upon the progress made in other branches of business. The greater part of the lumber and produce trade was carried by sailing vessels, as formerly, but steamers also made regular visits. The chief port with which this commerce was carried on was naturally San Francisco, yet other domestic ports are listed in the reports of clearances, and frequent shipments were also made to foreign ports. Full statistics regarding shipping during these years are not at hand, but from the available reports the number of vessels making visits to Humboldt Bay constantly increased.¹ During the year preceding April 1, 1868, the total number of vessels crossing the bar was 318,² while during the next twelve months the number had increased to 394.³ For the calendar year 1869 the whole number of vessels was 424.⁴ Following this, the total rose to 467 in 1870,⁵ and after a slight decrease the following year⁶ rose again to 560 in 1872,⁷ 628 in 1873, 655 in 1874,⁸ and 781 for the year 1875.⁹

Lumber and Produce Trade. The chief exports were lumber and produce. The reports show that for the year preceding April 1, 1868, the exports shipped from the bay amounted to 20,000,000 feet of lumber, 4,000,000 shingles, 124,000 sacks of potatoes, 600 sacks of peas, 4300 sacks of oats, and 2556 barrels of salmon.¹⁰ The following year there was a marked increase in all exports, lumber amounting to 30,981,000 feet; potatoes, 171,045 sacks; peas, 1200 sacks; and

¹ Much of the data on this subject is taken from the shipping news published in the Humboldt and San Francisco papers.

² *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 4, 1868.

³ *Ibid.*, Apr. 10, 1869.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, 1870.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1871.

⁶ There were but 454 in 1871, *ibid.*, Jan. 13, 1872.

⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 11, 1873.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Jan. 9, 1875.

⁹ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 131.

¹⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 4, Oct. 3, 1868.

bacon, lard, and pork, 192 tons.¹¹ During the remainder of 1869, there was an even greater increase in these exports.¹²

That shipping was closely dependent upon the lumber industry is very clearly shown during the early seventies, when a decrease occurred in the amount of lumber; for, whereas the lumber exports for 1869 amounted to more than 40,000,000 feet,¹³ the shipments of 1870 were less than 28,000,000 feet,¹⁴ and during the following year the number of vessels visiting the bay showed an actual decrease.¹⁵ By 1873 the lumber business was again more prosperous, the exports amounting to 33,943,147 feet,¹⁶ together with a large quantity of shingles, shakes and posts.¹⁷ During the two following years these amounts increased very considerably and had a marked effect upon the shipping activities.

In addition to the great amount of lumber shipped from Humboldt, the trade in farm produce, as has already been noted, formed an important factor in shipping. The chief article of produce was potatoes, but there were also many other items. In 1870 the exports amounted to 339,233 sacks of potatoes, 3150 sacks of oats, 400 boxes of apples, 1120 bales of wool, 1000 head of hogs, 400 barrels of pork and lard, and 490 barrels of salmon, besides other miscellaneous items.¹⁸ Since the freight rates on the steamers were high, practically all the produce was shipped by sailing vessels, a regular packet line being established by the H. H. Buhne Company between Humboldt Bay and San Francisco.¹⁹ Although shipping suffered during 1871 on account of the slump in the lumber market, the produce trade was good, and at times the bay showed evidences of much commercial activity.²⁰ The total produce exported during the year amounted to about 14,000 tons.²¹ For the year 1872 reports are incomplete, but the amount of produce exported was estimated to be far in advance of the previous year. At Hookton, which was an important shipping point for produce raised in Eel River Valley, twenty-three cargoes

¹¹ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 10, 1869.

¹² *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, Feb. 19, 1870; Oct. 30, 1869.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Jan. 22, Feb. 19, 1870.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1871. The amount given was 27,648,000 feet.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 13, 1872.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 23, 1875.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 7, 21, 1874.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1871.

¹⁹ *Northern Independent*, Sept. 29, 1870. The rate by this means was \$4.00 per ton.

²⁰ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 8, 1871; *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 18, 1871.

²¹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 13, 1872.

of lumber and produce, including 54,606 sacks of potatoes, were shipped during the half-year ending March 1, 1872.²² For the later years reliable statistics were not compiled, but from the data available it is apparent that there was a steady increase in the shipping activities along all lines.

Foreign Shipments. In describing the lumber trade allusion has been made to shipments to foreign ports. Among the domestic ports in addition to San Francisco, should be mentioned San Pedro, Santa Barbara, and Ventura, all of which received cargoes directly from Humboldt Bay.²³ The greatest consumption of Humboldt lumber outside the domestic trade was probably in the islands of the South Pacific, which have already been considered in connection with the shipbuilding industry.²⁴ In January, 1866, the *Mina Belle* sailed for Tahiti with a cargo of lumber, followed in August by a shipment to Honolulu in the *Milton Badger*.²⁵ Later the brig *Hesperian* and schooner *Alice* sailed for Tahiti, and the barque *C. R. Sertel* for Honolulu.²⁶ South America also became a customer for redwood lumber from Humboldt Bay. In the spring of 1869, the *Hesperian* took a cargo to Peru,²⁷ followed by the *Whistler* in 1872.²⁸ An attempt was made in 1872 to cultivate a demand on the Atlantic coast for redwood lumber, the *Arkwright* being sent to New York with a sample cargo.²⁹ Judging from the absence of further reports, this venture was not a success. Trade with the Pacific Islands continued to be of importance, shipments being sent to the Navigator Islands in the *Witch Queen* and *Nidaras*, and to Honolulu by the *Hesperian* and *A. P. Jordan* in the spring of 1872.³⁰

Reports of the foreign shipments of a few of the leading mills will illustrate the importance and extent of this foreign trade in redwood lumber. During 1873 Dolbeer & Carson exported 2,100,000 feet of lumber to foreign countries, as follows: Australia, 650,000 feet; South America, 700,000; Shanghai, 350,000; Honolulu, 400,000 feet. During the same

²² *Ibid.*, Apr. 6, 1872. Some was lumber from the Rohnerville Mills.

²³ *Ibid.*, Aug. 31, 1866; Jan. 1, 1867, to San Pedro; *ibid.*, July 30, Dec. 27, 1867, to Santa Barbara; *ibid.*, May 8, 1867; Mar. 24, Apr. 8, Aug. 7, 1868, etc., to Ventura.

²⁴ *Ante*, 264.

²⁵ *Humboldt Times*, shipping news for January 4 and August 24.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, shipping news for Mar. 23, 1867; Feb. 23, Apr. 8, 1868.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Aug. 7, 1869. It had sailed March 14.

²⁸ *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 6, 1872.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 21, 1872.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 6, 1872.

year D. R. Jones & Company is reported to have shipped 1,657,000 feet of lumber, 1,625,000 shingles, 152,000 shakes and 7220 posts to foreign ports; and likewise John Vance, 625,279 feet of lumber.³¹ The next year Jones & Company shipped 3,126,331 feet of lumber and 23,120 pickets to outside ports, while Evans & Company of the Occidental mill shipped 1,193,933 feet.³² It is evident, therefore, that as a lumber-producing port Humboldt Bay was recognized as important not alone in local shipping circles but in foreign trade as well.

Steamer Service. Although sailing vessels, both in number and in the amount of freight handled, far outclassed the steamers visiting Humboldt Bay, regular steamer service was looked upon by the people of the region not only as highly desirable, but even indispensable. The *Del Norte*, which had been placed on the route between San Francisco and the northern ports during the summer of 1865, continued to operate here for about three and a half years. The service was good, on the whole, but there were many complaints that the rates were high and that for several months during each year when the service was especially desired visits were infrequent and irregular.³³ Finally, in October, 1868, while attempting to enter Coos Bay, the steamer was wrecked.³⁴

Following the loss of the *Del Norte*, its place was taken temporarily by the *Pacific*,³⁵ and later by the *Pelican*, a former blockade runner. Beginning in February, 1869, this steamer made the run between San Francisco and Humboldt Bay for about a year,³⁶ when the *Pacific* was again placed on the route for semimonthly trips, including also other northern ports.³⁷

Notwithstanding the fact that the service rendered by these steamers was quite regular, their freight and passenger

³¹ *West Coast Signal*, Jan. 7, 21, 1874.

³² *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 23, 1875.

³³ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1866. It is here urged that the people of Humboldt should either own a steamer or at least hold the controlling stock in one so as to determine its operations.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Nov. 7, 1868.

³⁵ From Nov. 18 to Jan. 16.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Dec. 19, 1868; Mar. 6, 1869, Mar. 12, 1870.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Mar. 12, Apr. 9, 1870. A new wharf at the foot of C St., Eureka, was erected during the summer of 1870 by this company, the North Pacific Transportation Co., formerly known as the California, Oregon & Mexico Steamship Co. *Ibid.*, Mar. 26, Sept. 17, 1870.

rates were so high that much traffic was diverted to the sailing vessels.³⁸ During the year 1869 a regular packet line of sailing vessels was established to run between Eureka and San Francisco, the rates for transportation being ten dollars for cabin and five dollars for steerage fare, and four dollars per ton for all freight excepting wool.³⁹

In order to meet this competition the North Pacific Transportation Company, at the beginning of 1871, again placed the *Pelican* on this run, with the promise of better and cheaper service; there were to be three trips each month instead of two, the cost of cabin passage was reduced from twenty-one dollars to fifteen dollars and steerage from twelve dollars and fifty cents to ten dollars, while potatoes were to be carried for four dollars per ton.⁴⁰ For nearly two years the *Pelican* continued with practically no competition. The reduction in rate gave her increased business, but at times there was dissatisfaction with the independent attitude of the transportation company.

In view of this situation a visit of the steamer *Olympia* to Humboldt Bay in October, 1872, was hailed by the citizens of the place with enthusiasm,⁴¹ and a mass meeting was held to make arrangements whereby the new steamer might be induced to make regular visits to that port. After a schedule of rates had been drawn up, it was moved to "transfer the patronage heretofore given the *Pelican* to the *Olympia* or any other steamer the Holladay Line may put on the route."⁴² This naturally led to close competition between the two steamship lines. The agent for the North Pacific Transportation Company soon announced a reduction in passenger rates to ten dollars cabin fare, seven dollars fifty cents steerage, and three dollars a ton for freight, and also that the *Pelican* was to undergo extensive repairs.⁴³ In the place of the *Pelican* the *Pacific* and *Wm. Tabor* were placed in competition with the *Olympia*, and soon the passenger fare to San Francisco was again reduced, this time to five dollars,⁴⁴

³⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1871.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 13, 1870; *Northern Independent*, Sept. 29, 1870.

⁴⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 11, 1871; *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 8, 1871.

⁴¹ The *Olympia* was a steamer of about 350 tons, built in New York in 1869. It had "superior passenger accommodations" and was reputed to be "an excellent sea-vessel."

⁴² *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 19, 1877. The regular freight rate was to be \$4.00 per ton; potatoes \$3.50; passenger fare \$12.50.

⁴³ *West Coast Signal*, Dec. 11, 1872.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 18, 1872.

and later still to three dollars.⁴⁵ While this competition was welcomed by the greater part of the population, others saw distinct disadvantages arising therefrom; in the first place the low passenger rate caused many temporarily unemployed timber workers to desert the region, and, on the other hand, the low price for freight and potatoes caused the exportation of such quantities of that product that, for a time, the San Francisco market was much overstocked.⁴⁶ Whatever the effect upon the region, there could be no question as to the results upon the profits of the steamship companies; consequently, in February the *Olympia* gave up the fight and the old rates were restored.⁴⁷

After a short time the *Pelican* was again on the route, having been overhauled and equipped with new boilers.⁴⁸ This steamer did not long enjoy the monopoly of the steamer traffic, however, for within a month the steamer *Coquille* made its first appearance upon Humboldt Bay. This vessel was of light draught and could easily negotiate the passage to the wharves at Arcata or Hookton, and hoped by this means to build up a good trade.⁴⁹ This proved to be the case, so the *Coquille* continued as a regular competitor with the *Pelican*, both vessels making regular trips between San Francisco and Humboldt Bay. Early in 1875 the former was remodeled and returned to its route a "full fledged, comfortable, compact and neat little ocean steamer."⁵⁰ During the summer of 1875 still another steamer was added to those plying between Humboldt Bay and San Francisco; this was the *Humboldt*, built during that year. Since our study closes with the year 1875, the effect of this vessel upon the service cannot be fully determined; it was, however, of Humboldt manufacture and locally owned and therefore was looked upon by the people of Humboldt Bay as one upon which they could fully depend.⁵¹

⁴⁵ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 5, 1873. The keenness of this competition may be seen when it is known that until the railroad was built to Eureka in 1914 the regular steamer passage between San Francisco and Eureka was \$10.00.

⁴⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 8, 1873; *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 5, 12, 1873.

⁴⁷ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 12, quoting *San Francisco Chronicle*, Feb. 2; *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 15, 1873.

⁴⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 29, 1873. For a time the *Californian* had run in the place of the *Wm. Tabor*.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, Apr. 26, 1873.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Mar. 20, 1875.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 2, 9, 1875. It was owned by the Humboldt Steamship Company.

Local Shipping on Humboldt Bay. Since the bay furnished an easy and economical means of transportation, it continued to be used extensively even after the various places around it were connected by wagon roads. Several vessels built especially for the purpose made regular trips between these places. The man most active in promoting this trade was Mr. S. Daby, who early in 1866 began to operate the small steamer *Laura Ellen* between Eureka and Arcata twice daily, and to the south bay points three times each week.⁵² The following year its place was taken by the steamer *Ida*,⁵³ which was in turn replaced later by the *Gussie McAlpine*, a small steamer that had been recently built by Cousins.⁵⁴ Although nearly destroyed by fire during the summer of 1868, it was rebuilt and was soon again in service.⁵⁵ Other vessels joined in this trade, and at times shipping was brisk.⁵⁶

Meanwhile the development of the country south of Humboldt Bay gave increased importance to the shipping points in that quarter. For some time the *Laura Ellen* had been making three trips a week between Eureka and Myer's Landing, but in January, 1867, it was forced to meet the competition of the schooner *Dirigo*, which began to make regular trips between Eureka and the south bay points at Salmon Creek, Hookton, and Myer's Landing.⁵⁷ This trade became so extensive that later in the year the sloop *Sam Slick* and the schooner *Glide* also began to share in the profits. Connecting with these vessels on the bay, wagons were operated over Table Bluff to the waters of Eel River, where goods were reshipped on the sloop *Lucy W.* or schooner *Reliance* to various places along Eel and Salt rivers. The rates asked for the transportation of freight in this manner from Eureka varied from \$1.25 per ton to Hookton or Salmon Creek, to \$4 to Eel River and \$4.50 to Salt River.⁵⁸ In the fall of 1869 the *Laura Ellen* was overhauled, but was soon again making three trips a week between Eureka and

⁵² *Ibid.*, Feb. 3, 1866.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, Mar. 11, 1867. Daby had then taken over the Humboldt House in Eureka, but continued his transportation business, the small steamer sailing daily from the city wharf in front of his hotel.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 11, 1868.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Aug. 8, Nov. 28, 1868.

⁵⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 6, 1869; Oct. 9, 1875.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 19, 1867. The freight rate was also reduced, it being \$1.25 per ton for all freight except hay, and \$2.00 per thousand for lumber or ton of hay from Hookton to Eureka. From Myer's Landing the rate was \$1.00 per ton.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, Sept. 28, 1867.

Hookton.⁵⁹ In 1871 the small steamer *Silva* was launched⁶⁰ and was commissioned for daily trips between these two places.⁶¹

Through the amount of freight handled Hookton rose to a place of some importance. To obviate the additional expense incident to shipping freight at Eureka the experiment of transporting directly from Hookton to San Francisco was first made during the summer of 1869. In June of that year the bark *Monitor* was loaded at Hookton wharf and experienced no difficulty in making the trip with her full cargo, notwithstanding the fact that she carried 250,000 feet of lumber.⁶² From that time on the shipping from the southern part of the bay increased rapidly, even the steamer *Coquille* being among the more or less regular visitors.⁶³ Arcata also profited by this new development. During the early part of the year 1875 the Arcata wharf was lengthened six hundred yards to reach deeper water⁶⁴ and thereby to command a larger share of the commerce of the bay.⁶⁵

Statistics for the year ending June 30, 1875, indicate the amount of business at these smaller shipping points, the total being more than 3378 tons, divided, in part, as follows: through the warehouse of J. W. Holt, at Hookton, 6,833,153 pounds of produce, 5,840,000 pounds of merchandise, 7,385,000 shingles, 1670 sacks of charcoal, and 600 feet of lumber. Through Heney's warehouse at Southport there were shipped 2,733,397 pounds of potatoes, 453,787 pounds of grain, 28,158 pounds of peas, 3418 half-barrels of salmon, 94 half-barrels of pork, 157 half-barrels of butter, 132 boxes of apples, 2000 sacks of charcoal, 150,000 feet of lumber, and 139 tons of merchandise. Myer's Landing showed the following shipments: Potatoes 3382 sacks; oats and grains 2014 sacks; hay 937 bales; lumber 54,000 feet; merchandise 75 packages; salt 260 sacks; making a total of 480 tons. From Jeff Knight's Landing there were shipped 1500 sacks of potatoes and 3000 sacks of oats. The Arcata wharf shipped 1554 tons of freight, including 800 tons of potatoes, 600 tons

⁵⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 22, 1869.

⁶⁰ *Ante*, 264, n. 47.

⁶¹ *Northern Independent*, Apr. 27, 1871.

⁶² *Humboldt Times*, July 3, 1869.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Apr. 26, 1873.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Feb. 27, 1875.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, July 17, 1875.

of merchandise, 100 tons of grains, and 54 tons of other articles.⁶⁶

Navigation on Eel River. From the previous discussion it is evident that small craft at least had done much service upon Eel River and the adjoining slough, known as Salt River. The desirability of transporting shipments directly from Eel River on ocean-going vessels, thus avoiding the expense and delay incident to crossing Table Bluff, was realized, and several efforts were made between 1865 and 1875 to carry out such a project; but in each instance the attempt was doomed to failure. The first of these was in October, 1865, when the Eel River Navigation Company was organized for the purpose of promoting shipping upon that stream.⁶⁷ The absence of further reports dealing with the activities of this company indicates that there were probably insurmountable difficulties.

An investigation during the summer of 1867 showed that there were eight and one-half feet of water on the river bar at extreme low tide, which was sufficient to allow vessels of moderate size to cross the entrance, a feat which the *Mary Cleveland* accomplished on several occasions.⁶⁸ The next year the government promised to make a more complete survey of the river.⁶⁹ Many were enthusiastic at this time over the probable success of the undertaking, and subscription books were opened for raising money to purchase or fit up a tug for use in towing sailing vessels across the river bar.⁷⁰ Early in the spring of 1869 the steamer *John Hancock* was purchased and converted into a sailing vessel, and the engines used in a tug which was then being built.⁷¹ As an additional encouragement the report was given out that the steamer *Pelican* would soon make calls at Eel River for the purpose of taking on passengers and produce for San Francisco.⁷² As in the case of many earlier projects nothing further is recorded in regard to these matters. In August the *Laura Ellen*, which had seen service on Eel River before,

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1875.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Oct. 14, 1865.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, July 13, 1867.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Feb. 22, 1868.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Feb. 8, 1868. Buhne was later sent to San Francisco to arrange for the purchase. *Ibid.*, Oct. 31, 1868.

⁷¹ McPherson and Wetherbee are named as the purchasers. Whether they were connected with the proposed purchase by Buhne and others is not known. *Ibid.*, Mar. 13, 1869.

⁷² *Humboldt Times*, quoting San Francisco *Bulletin* of Mar. 8, 1869.

was again overhauled and placed upon the river for the purpose of transporting freight from Eel River ports to Humboldt Bay, and towing logs from the river to the mills at Eureka. It was argued that more difficult feats were accomplished on the swiftly flowing rivers of the New England coast.⁷³ The success of the venture, however, is unrecorded.

Finally, in 1870, the government made the promised survey of the river. The engineers reported that for about eight months of the year the river was navigable for steam vessels of light draught, but that it was at no time safe for sailing vessels.⁷⁴ It was doubtless this decision that again brought up for consideration the feasibility of constructing a canal to connect Eel River with Humboldt Bay. As early as 1850 and again in 1859 this idea had been discussed.⁷⁵ In 1869 a resident of Eel River Valley called attention to the matter, arguing that a canal thirty feet wide by two feet deep at low tide could be constructed for the price of a tug for Eel River Bar. The charges for transporting logs could be made to pay for its construction, while the returns from other shipping would be clear profit.⁷⁶ No action was taken at that time, but in December, 1871, a petition was prepared memorializing Congress to aid in the construction of this canal, in which it was stated that

These waters approach at high tide within half a mile of each other and that a channel or canal of capacity for navigation can be constructed which will be less than two miles long with a depth of cut at the deepest part of excavation not to exceed sixteen feet.⁷⁷

In April, 1875, the steamer *Ada*, which had been for a time in operation on Eel River, returned to Humboldt Bay carrying a cargo of ten tons. This was reported at the time as being the first cargo transported from Eel River to Eureka entirely by water. The amount of business on the river did not justify the employment of a vessel of her size, so she was withdrawn and placed upon Humboldt Bay,⁷⁸ while the small steamer *Robert Fulton*, which had been built on the

⁷³ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 7, 1869.

⁷⁴ *Northern Independent*, Feb. 23, 1871.

⁷⁵ *Ante*, 134.

⁷⁶ *Humboldt Times*, May 8, 1869.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 6; *Alta California*, Mar. 10, 1872.

⁷⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 24, 1875.



Photo by Martin

AIRPLANE VIEW OF HUMBOLDT BAY LOOKING NORTH FROM EUREKA



Photo by Freeman Art Co.

NORTH JETTY, HUMBOLDT HARBOR
 Showing masts of the wrecked *Corona*

river, was lengthened and refitted to perform that service for Eel River.⁷⁹

Harbor Improvements. The improvement of the harbor, so largely dependent upon governmental aid, was an ever present question, for new demands were constantly arising and needed improvements were usually slow in coming. Although Congress had made an appropriation for placing buoys along the coast, including the marking of the channel at the entrance of Humboldt Bay,⁸⁰ this had not yet been done in 1868.⁸¹ During the summer and fall of 1868, a survey of the harbor was made and plans drawn up for further improvements.⁸² One of the most important needs felt by the people of Humboldt Bay was that of a port of entry, for it was thought that the amount of shipping done was ample justification for this demand. A petition was circulated early in 1870⁸³ and the matter placed before the administration. The Secretary of the Treasury declared himself favorable to the idea,⁸⁴ and upon his recommendation it was included in the rivers and harbors bill; but for some reason it did not become a law.⁸⁵ The fogs along the coast were a great hindrance to shipping for vessels had considerable difficulty in locating the entrance to the bay when it was thus obscured.⁸⁶ Consequently, in May, 1874, a fog whistle was placed near the entrance to the bay.⁸⁷ Since many complaints had been made regarding the lighthouse, it was equipped with a new lamp during this same year.⁸⁸

Humboldt Bay was not the only recipient of governmental favors, lighthouses being erected during this period at Cape Mendocino and elsewhere. The former is one of the most westerly points of continental United States, and a dangerous headland, hence the location of a light upon it was a benefit to all shipping along that portion of the coast. The location was finally selected in 1867,⁸⁹ and the following year

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, It was advertised to make regular trips between Heney's Landing and Centerville twice each week or more frequently if business justified it.

⁸⁰ *Ante*, 131.

⁸¹ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 1, 1868.

⁸² *Ibid.*, August-September, 1869.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 19, 1870.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Nov. 12, 1870.

⁸⁵ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 8, Mar. 1, 1871.

⁸⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 9, 1872.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, May 2, 23, 1874.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 7, 14, 1874; U. S. coast and geodetic survey, *Coast Pilot*, 1869, 100.

⁸⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 23, 1867.

the lighthouse was erected.⁹⁰ Point Reyes, just north of San Francisco, was marked with a light in 1870,⁹¹ and another was placed at Trinidad Head the following year.⁹²

In addition to these improvements, which had been secured by federal appropriation, shipping was greatly aided by the placing of new towboats upon Humboldt Bay, thus supplementing the *Mary Ann*, which had done faithful service for so many years. In the fall of 1869 the *H. H. Buhne* was built and brought to Humboldt Bay by its owners, Buhne & Kentfield.⁹³ During the next year the tug *C. J. Brenham* was also placed upon the bay, but of its later activities little is known.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ *Humboldt Times*, June 29, 1867; May 30, 1868. There were times, however, when this light failed to shine. *Ibid.*, June 26, 1869.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 3, 1870.

⁹² *Ibid.*, Dec. 2, 1871. The people of Trinidad were much elated at this improvement and began to look forward to the time when they would be granted an appropriation for a breakwater to Pilot Rock, thus affording them a safe harbor.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, Mar. 6, Aug. 14, Sept. 25, 1869. It was a boat of 98 tons.

⁹⁴ *Northern Independent*, June 9, 1870.

CHAPTER XIX

ROADS, RAILS AND WIRES 1865-1875

With the revival of immigration and more prosperous conditions following the close of the Indian wars came the demand for more and better means of transportation and communication. The papers were filled with these demands for new roads and suggestions for the improvement of old ones. During the earlier years mule trails had sufficed to connect the seaport towns with the sparse settlements and mining regions; while later, during the Indian wars, since many of the frontier settlements were abandoned and travel was attended with so many dangers, road building was not considered of much importance.

The Mattole Road. The first district to feel the need of new roads was quite naturally that portion of the country most affected by the oil excitement. As seen in an earlier chapter¹ the direct result of this discovery was an increase in the population of the Bear and Mattole River valleys, and a consequent demand that these districts be made more accessible. Attempts at sea transportation had failed² and the old trail, following in part the ocean beach, while suitable for the lesser needs of the earlier period, was found entirely inadequate for the new demands, especially the transportation of heavy machinery into the region or the exportation of oil.³ Since it was not expected that the county would bear the expense of constructing this road, private companies were organized with this purpose in view. The first of these was the Eel River and Mattole Plank and Turnpike Road Company, incorporated at Eureka in July, 1865.⁴ The next month the Petrolia and Centerville Plank and Turnpike Company was also incorporated, with a capital stock of \$30,000.⁵

¹ *Ante*, 229 *et seq.*

² *Ante*, 103, 237.

³ *Humboldt Times*, June 10, 1865.

⁴ *Ibid.*, July 15, 1865; Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of Incorporation*, E.

⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 19, Sept. 30, 1865; Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of Incorporation*, P. Note also the projected railroad to Centerville and Mattole, *infra*, 287.

Notwithstanding the interest taken in these roads in 1865, the one from Eel River to Mattole was not constructed until 1869,⁶ while the Centerville and Bear River road was not built until 1875.⁷ In 1871 a daily stage began to operate between Eureka and Petrolia, making the trip by Table Bluff, Ferndale, and Centerville.⁸

Hydesville-Eureka-Arcata Road. The one main road in the region extended from Hydesville to Eureka and around the bay to Arcata. This road had never been built in a substantial manner, yet it was for many years practically the only wagon road in Humboldt County, while Klamath County was still satisfied with reasonably good mule trails.⁹ This road was, therefore, often in need of repair, and the demand for branch roads was constantly increasing.¹⁰ Between Eureka and Arcata the swampy nature of the land over which the road passed caused much trouble, and it was very desirable that a well-built road should be constructed.¹¹ Constant repair and gradual improvement finally overcame the most serious of these difficulties. In 1867 a daily stage began operation between Eureka and Arcata.¹² Between Eureka and Hydesville the chief difficulty lay in the route first chosen for the road, as the early roadmakers invariably sought the highlands in order to avoid the marshes. In this case the first road had been built over Humboldt Hill and was not an easy route. The agitation for a new road around the hill was begun early in 1866, but the change was not effected until the summer of 1872.¹³ During the year 1867 Bullard & Williams started to operate a stage between Eureka and Hydesville, running three times a week.¹⁴

Roads Into the Bald Hills. In addition to the roads already considered, there was a constantly increasing demand for others extending out into the Bald Hills and to Hoopa Valley. This was especially the case in the district from Kneeland

⁶ *Humboldt Times*, July 18, Aug. 15, 1868; Aug. 28, 1869.

⁷ *Ibid.*, May 8, 1875.

⁸ *West Coast Signal*, Sept. 20, 1871. The stage left Eureka daily at 1 p. m., going as far as Centerville that night. The rest of the trip was made the next day.

⁹ *Sacramento, Daily Union*, Aug. 21, 1866.

¹⁰ *Humboldt Times*, May 5, 1866; July 6, 1867.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, May 15, 1869.

¹² *Ibid.*, June 8, 1867; Sept. 4, 1869; May 7, 1870.

¹³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 10, 1866; Sept. 11, 1869; July 9, Nov. 12, 1870; Mar. 25, Apr. 22, 1871; May 15, June 1, 1872.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, June 8, 1867. The place of Williams was later taken by Whitman, *ibid.*, May 8, 1869; and by Sweasy in 1871, *ibid.*, Apr. 22, 1871.

Prairie southward to Yager Creek and Blocksburgers,¹⁵ where the increasing population demanded better access to Eureka and Humboldt Bay. For many the most feasible route led up Freshwater Slough to Kneeland Prairie, and thence south to Booths Run and Yager Creek.¹⁶ Since a road had long been needed to Kneeland Prairie it was decided early in 1872 to build that portion of the road.¹⁷ The extension of the road south to Yager Creek was a matter for further action since it had not yet been determined whether this region might be reached more easily by way of Hydesville.¹⁸ To the north of Humboldt Bay, there was also agitation for better communication between the bay and Hoopa Valley and the Bald Hills near Redwood Creek. In 1869 an unsuccessful effort was made by the officers at Fort Gaston to secure the aid of the government in constructing a road from Hoopa Valley to the coast.¹⁹ Another attempt was made in 1873 with similar result;²⁰ but in the meantime the supervisors of Klamath County opened a new and better trail, shortening the distance between Trinidad and the Bald Hills which lay east of that place.²¹ A road extending up Mad River was also being agitated.²²

Road Legislation. In order to provide for more regular action in the construction and care of roads in Humboldt County the state legislature passed an act in March, 1870, making each township a road district, which should be in charge of a road overseer. It provided that all able-bodied men between eighteen and sixty should be required each year to give two days' labor to roads. In addition to this the supervisors were to levy annually upon all real estate a tax to be used for the improvement of roads.²³ In February, 1872, another act, superseding this, was passed, wherein the road districts were made to coincide with the supervisorial districts of the county. It also imposed a poll tax of \$2.00

¹⁵ Known now as Blocksburg.

¹⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 18, 1869; Feb. 21, 1872.

¹⁷ *West Coast Signal*, May 22, 1872; Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of the Board of Supervisors*, C, 453, 480. The contract was let to John Devoy, who agreed to complete the road by September, 1872.

¹⁸ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 4, 1874.

¹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, July 31, 1869.

²⁰ *West Coast Signal*, Oct. 29, 1873.

²¹ *Humboldt Times*, July 16, 1870.

²² *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 20, 1872.

²³ *Statutes of California*, 1869-1870: 310-314. This tax was to be not less than ten nor more than forty cents on the \$100. The act is published in full in the supplement to the *Humboldt Times*, May 7, 1870.

on each male resident in lieu of the labor previously required, and prescribed more exactly the rules whereby the supervisors should let contracts and expend the road funds of the county.²⁴

The Mendocino Road. While the matter of local roads in the region around Humboldt Bay received much attention from the people and newspapers it did not command so much interest as did the agitation for a road connecting the Humboldt region with Mendocino County and hence with the remainder of the state. In previous chapters the early history of this agitation has been considered.²⁵ Southward from Humboldt Bay the wagon road extended to Hydesville, but from that place either to Long Valley, or Round Valley, in Mendocino County, the only travel was by mule trail.

Repeated petitions failed to secure favorable action until 1866, when the supervisors of Humboldt County declared the route of the main overland trail from the Van Duzen to the county line to be a public highway.²⁶ At this time it was proposed to bond the county for the purpose of raising the necessary funds for building this road.²⁷ In 1867 the supervisors asked for an expression of opinion from the people regarding the levy of a tax for that purpose as well as for the construction of another road to the Klamath County line toward Hoopa Valley.²⁸ This resulted in such a division of opinion that the matter was temporarily dropped.²⁹ In the fall of 1868 the issue of a Mendocino road was put to a vote and defeated decisively by a vote of 1038 to 134, practically the whole county voting against the issue, with the exception of Hydesville and South Fork precincts.³⁰ It was opposed by the lumbermen because their product was transported by sea and it was therefore not necessary to them, whereas the stockmen believed that the trails were sufficient for their business, and, furthermore the roads would attract settlers

²⁴ *Statutes of California, 1871-1872*: 105-108; *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 2, 1872. For report on the number of miles of road in each district, see *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 5, 1873.

²⁵ *Ante*, 225.

²⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 15, 1866. This was merely a declaration of the right of way.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, May 26, 1866.

²⁸ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, B, 465-467, Dec. 5, 1867.

²⁹ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, B, 468; *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 9, May 4, Nov. 9, Dec. 7, 14, 21, 1867; Jan. 4, 11, 18, 25, Feb. 1, 8, 1868. The editor of the *Times* finally discontinued the publication of these communications.

³⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 7, 14, 1868; Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, C, 87. Two-thirds of the affirmative vote came from these two precincts, and yet even there the vote was far from unanimous.

which would limit their extensive stock ranges.³¹ At any rate, it was clear that the taxpayers of the county were not ready to build the road if they were to bear the expense.

The next year the agitation for a road to Mendocino took a new turn, due to the completion of the road down the coast to the Mattole Valley. The people of this section, who had strongly opposed the road when the interior route was considered,³² now favored the project, proposing that the road should be run from Ferndale to Petrolia, thence along the north side of the Mattole River to Armstrong's and then via Cathy's and Elk Ridge to Long Valley.³³ Beyond those locally interested this coast road did not secure enthusiastic support, the interior route having been the one generally traveled.

For a number of years the discussion dragged on without much result.³⁴ At the close of the year 1871 an editorial in the *Humboldt Times*, declaring that the road to Mendocino was the greatest need of Humboldt County, was the beginning of another long series of articles and letters in the local papers in reference to this road or some other favorite route.³⁵ The building of a telegraph line along the coast route in 1873 gave much support to its friends,³⁶ but its opponents were equally determined. Furthermore, the rapidity with which the Bald Hills along the eastern part of Humboldt County were being settled led to the suggestion that the road might properly be built into that section, connecting with a Mendocino County road at Round Valley.³⁷ The advantage of this route was that after having passed through the redwood belt between the bay and Kneeland Prairie, or some similar point, it would then lead through comparatively open country.

³¹ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 25, 1869.

³² See the remonstrance against the Mendocino Road signed by 56 citizens of Mattole, Archives of County Clerk, *Supervisors' Road Petition*, 1867.

³³ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 11, 1869; Jan. 8, 15, Feb. 19, Sept. 24, 1870.

³⁴ The assembly passed a bill in 1870 to aid in the construction of a road from Round Valley to Hydesville. It was not, however, passed by the senate. *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 26, Oct. 1, 1870. In October, 1870, the road viewers of Mendocino County reported favorably on this route, *ibid.*, Oct. 28, 1870. Coast road was again urged, *ibid.*, Jan. 7, Feb. 11, 1871; *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 12, 1871.

³⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 23, 1871, etc.; *West Coast Signal*, Dec. 22, 1871; Jan. 31, Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28, Mar. 20, Apr. 17, 1872. Certain citizens of Mattole even offered to build a road from Upper Mattole to the county line for \$4,000, or to Beal's ranch in Mendocino County for \$10,000.

³⁶ *West Coast Signal*, Oct. 1, 1873.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1874.

At this juncture the matter was settled by action of the legislature under an act approved February 28, 1874, whereby the supervisors of Humboldt County were empowered to issue bonds to the amount of sixty thousand dollars for the purpose of building two roads: one to run from Kneeland Prairie and Yager Creek south to the county line; the other to follow as nearly as possible the route of the telegraph line along the coast.³⁸ Thus authorized the supervisors proceeded to act immediately. During August twenty-five thousand dollars worth of bonds were sold and contracts were let for the construction of portions of these roads.³⁹ Much opposition was aroused at the manner in which this had been accomplished, but with little effect.⁴⁰ By June, 1875, the road had been built from Kneeland Prairie to a point past old Camp Iaqua,⁴¹ while the Van Duzen River had been bridged at Robinson's ferry, from then on known as Bridgeville.⁴²

Mail service. The mail service was now much more satisfactory than formerly, although charges of inefficiency and unnecessary delay were still sometimes heard.⁴³ In response to numerous petitions, the overland mail into the Humboldt region was, after July 1, 1868, despatched three times a week instead of semiweekly,⁴⁴ and later, in 1871, made a daily mail.⁴⁵ Within the region itself the growth of population called for additional post offices and mail routes. Two of these new offices were established as the result of the oil excitement, namely, Petrolia in the Mattole Valley, and another on Bear River, known for a time as Gas Jet.⁴⁶ A post office was likewise established at Table Bluff in 1873.⁴⁷

Proposed Telegraph Line, 1861. As the overland telegraph into California neared completion the people of the region around Humboldt Bay were alive to the advantages of being connected by a telegraph line with the rest of the country.

³⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 7, 1874; *Statutes of California, 1873-1874*: 181. \$36,000 was to be appropriated to the former, and \$24,000 to the latter road.

³⁹ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, D, 277-278, 322, 331, 336-337, 348, 350, 352-353, 361.

⁴⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 18, May 9, 16, 1875.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, June 12, 1875.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Jan. 2, 1875.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 8, Sept. 19, Oct. 31, 1868; Nov. 6, 1869.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 19, 1867; June 27, 1868.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 11, 1871; *West Coast Signal*, Sept. 6, 1871.

⁴⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 8, 1865; May 5, 1866; July 18, 1868.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Mar. 12, 1873. The people in the Blocksburg district were also demanding a mail route, *West Coast Signal*, Mar. 28, 1873.

As early as May, 1861, the editor of the *Humboldt Times* called attention to this matter, giving his idea of the probable cost and inviting comment from others.⁴⁸ The opinion from those more familiar with telegraph construction was somewhat less optimistic regarding the cost. It was then proposed that a line might more easily be brought over from Weaverville, a distance of only ninety miles.⁴⁹ Other discussion followed, but without any immediate result.⁵⁰

Revival of Agitation for Telegraph Service. After this discussion the matter of a telegraph was dropped for a number of years. Finally, in July, 1869, in an article entitled, "What Humboldt Needs Most," the editor of the *Times* again urged the building of the telegraph line. He considered the Weaverville route out of the question on account of the heavy winter snows and the absence of a road in that direction. His preference was for a line along the coast.⁵¹ At this time the matter was brought before the legislature by Senator Murch, representative of these northern counties, and a law was adopted authorizing Mendocino, Humboldt, Klamath, and Del Norte counties to issue bonds to aid in the construction of a line through those counties.⁵² The project was also aided in May, 1870, by a visit of Mr. George S. Ladd, a representative of the Western Union Telegraph Company, who expressed himself as being much pleased with the prospect of the proposed line, the chief difficulty being the isolation of the region.⁵³

Early the following year Mr. James Gamble, Superintendent of the Western Union Company, visited Eureka and made the proposition that his company would finance one-third of the cost of the proposed line up to the amount of forty thousand dollars, provided the people of Mendocino and Humboldt would bear the remainder of the expense.⁵⁴ Accordingly, a meeting of the citizens was held at Ryan's Hall in Eureka, at which time seven thousand dollars was subscribed.⁵⁵ In other counties the proposition was also

⁴⁸ *Humboldt Times*, May 25, 1861. The transcontinental telegraph was completed Oct. 24, 1861, *San Francisco Herald*, Oct. 25, 1861.

⁴⁹ *Humboldt Times*, June 8, 1861.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, Nov. 2, 1861. It was proposed that local people should subscribe for stock in the State Line Co. and thus encourage the project.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, July 17, Sept. 4, 11, 1869.

⁵² *Statutes of California, 1869-1870*: 508-509; *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 12, 19, 26, 1870

⁵³ *Humboldt Times*, May 14, Dec. 24, 1870.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 21, 1871.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, Jan. 28, 1871. Shares sold at \$50 each.

favorably received,⁵⁶ and as a result, the Humboldt and Mendocino Telegraph Company was incorporated, for the specified purpose of constructing a line from Petaluma, Sonoma County, to Eureka.⁵⁷

Completion of the Telegraph, 1873. Although completion was expected by 1871, its actual construction was delayed until two years later. During the spring of 1873, the Humboldt & Mendocino Telegraph Company was replaced by the North Pacific Telegraph Company, which proposed a line from San Francisco to Crescent City in Del Norte County.⁵⁸ It was soon evident that the new company was in earnest, for construction work proceeded rapidly at several points along the route. By the middle of October telegraphic connection between Eureka and Arcata was completed and on November 20, 1873, the first message was exchanged between Eureka and Petaluma.⁵⁹ Thus, at last, was the isolation of the region in large measure removed. No longer were the people required to await the arrival of the overland mail, or the coming of the steamer, to receive news of the happenings in the world at large. For some time there was much trouble along the line due to various causes, yet these were not insurmountable, and the telegraph line became an important factor in the advance of this region.

Early Railroads, 1854-1860. After the building of the telegraph line the next object sought by the people of the Humboldt Bay region was a railroad connecting them with the outer world. Many times it seemed that this was about to be accomplished, but not until 1915, sixty-five years after the beginning of American occupation of the bay district, was a railroad actually put in operation.

Although this region was without railway connection for so many decades, railroads nevertheless contributed to its development. The early logging roads around Humboldt Bay were among the first railroads in the state. In an article entitled "Railroads," the *Humboldt Times* in its second issue stated:⁶⁰

In our county . . . we have upwards of twenty miles of good and substantial [rail]roads, built by our

⁵⁶ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 22, Mar. 22, 1871.

⁵⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 4, Mar. 15, 1871.

⁵⁸ *West Coast Signal*, May 14, June 18, Aug. 27, 1873.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Nov. 26, 1873. The rates were then \$1.50 for ten words.

⁶⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 9, 1854.

loggers, which are in daily use, conveying logs to the water's edge.

These early logging railways were very primitive in form and construction, yet they were railroads, and hence are entitled to consideration here. Usually the rails were made of two parallel straight saplings, while the trucks were fitted "with big axles and large flanged wheels hewed out hollow to fit the track." Horses or mules furnished the motive power.⁶¹ What comes nearer the present day conception of a railroad was constructed by the Union Wharf and Plank Walk Company during the spring of 1855. It extended from the town of Union (Arcata) a distance of one mile to the end of the wharf, an old white horse, named "Spanking Fury," serving for many years as locomotive.⁶²

Projected Railroads to Eel River Valley, 1865-1871. The first recorded suggestion of a railroad between Humboldt Bay and any part of Eel River was made during the year 1865. At that time the interest in petroleum had brought into such prominence the town of Centerville, which lay on the main route to these oil fields, that it was proposed to build a railroad from some point on Humboldt Bay to that place, Eel River being crossed by means of ferries. The reports indicate that the stock had already been subscribed and that competent engineers were soon to be employed to make the surveys and estimates.⁶³ The natural impracticability of the scheme, however, together with the failure of the oil wells, probably accounts for the fact that no further reports on this matter appear.

The idea of a railroad to Eel River Valley proper was first advanced during the year 1868. A number of meetings were held to consider a remedy for the high freight rates charged from the valley to Eureka.⁶⁴ The construction of a railroad seemed the most feasible plan. One scheme advanced was to offer as a subsidy to the company which would be the first to build and operate a railroad from the bay to Eel River Valley,⁶⁵ a saw mill capable of cutting 20,000 feet of lumber

⁶¹ Lindsey, *Statement of reminiscences*, MS., 4.

⁶² *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 24, Apr. 7, 14, May 5, Aug. 11, Sept. 15, Oct. 6, Nov. 10, 1855; May 17, 1856. Deming, *Statement*, MS.

⁶³ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 5, 1865.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 12, 1868. Freight from Arcata to Eureka was but \$1.25 per ton, whereas from Rohnerville it was \$6.00, at least.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Nov. 21, 1868.

a day. Another plan called for a railroad or tramway drawn by horses, since steam locomotives seemed beyond the means available. It was argued that this would be cheaper than to build a plank road or turnpike, and would be passable at all seasons of the year. Still another plan centered about the possibility of opening the river to navigation.⁶⁶

In 1871 the matter of a railroad from Eureka to Eel River Valley again became an issue. At this time it was proposed to build the road from Eureka to Singley's Ferry, provided a subsidy should be granted. Bonds were to be issued and one-third of the subsidy paid as soon as five miles of road had been completed.⁶⁷ As soon as the bonding issue was presented to the people of the county strong opposition immediately arose from all quarters, and at an election on the eighteenth of October the plan was defeated by the decisive vote of 899 to 143.⁶⁸

Local Railroad Building, 1871-1875. Although efforts to secure a railroad between the bay and Eel River Valley were unsuccessful, real progress in railway construction was being made by the lumbermen of the region. The depletion of the lumber supply close to the water's edge necessitated means for bringing the logs to the mills, for which purpose the early, rudely-built railways were inadequate. The first of the newer logging railroads was built at Trinidad early in the year 1871,⁶⁹ followed very shortly by a number of other roads around the bay. One of the most important of these was constructed by the South Bay Railroad and Land Company, a corporation organized early in 1875 for the "purpose of constructing an iron track railroad for logging and lumbering purposes from Salmon Creek Landing to Yager Creek."⁷⁰ This road was soon in operation.⁷¹ In the meantime the Union Plank Walk and Railroad Company had extended their track inland as far as Falk & Minor's Mill,⁷² and had substituted steam locomotives for horse

⁶⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 28, Dec. 12, 1868.

⁶⁷ *Northern Independent*, June 29, 1871.

⁶⁸ *Humboldt Times*, July 1, 8, 22; *Northern Independent*, July 13, 1871; Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, C, 393. Not one of the seventeen precincts gave a majority in favor of the subsidy. Eureka gave the largest vote in its favor, being 115 to 146.

⁶⁹ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 8, 1871.

⁷⁰ *Humboldt Times*, May 1, 1875. A distance of thirteen miles.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, May 8, 15, July 31, Aug. 21, 1875; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 138, 139.

⁷² *Humboldt Times*, May 15, 1875.

power;⁷³ while William Carson had also built a road up Jacoby Creek;⁷⁴ and John Vance, another to his newly-erected mill on Mad River.⁷⁵

Projected Railroads to Humboldt Bay, 1865-1875. The building of the railroad to Humboldt Bay was a subject upon which so much talk had been expended and hopes so often vainly aroused that the average resident of the region stubbornly refused to become enthusiastic over its prospects until he knew the final spike had been driven. More than forty-three years before the completion of a road there was published the following editorial, which, during the succeeding years, was often repeated whenever an editor felt in an especially optimistic spirit:

The simple mention of the word railroad, has a charm to every dweller within the limits of Humboldt County. So much talk in that direction has been done in the past, that our people have become incredulous, and are always ready to express doubt when the subject is alluded to. Now, however, we are able to assure them to a certainty that there is a *bona fide* intention on the part of some of our most prominent citizens . . . to begin the construction of this road, etc.⁷⁶

The history of the railroad amply explains this popular incredulity. To attempt a full discussion of the various schemes to build a railroad into the Humboldt Bay region which were proposed during these years does not lie within the province of this study.⁷⁷ Even a superficial examination, however, is sufficient to demonstrate the fact that railroad men were keenly alive to the possibilities of Humboldt Bay and that the people of that region were alternately having their hopes aroused or depressed by reports of new progress or failure.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, Oct. 23, 1875.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, May 1, 1875; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 139. This was constructed of standard T-rails, at such a grade that the loaded cars were brought to tidewater by a gravity system.

⁷⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 21, 1875; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 128.

⁷⁶ *West Coast Signal*, June 28, 1871.

⁷⁷ The chief difficulties in dealing with this subject are: First, the habit of railroad promoters of organizing themselves into smaller, apparently independent companies whenever it served their purpose to do so. In this way the same men might be operating at the same time under different names, and one company might be dissolved only to be reincorporated under a different name. In the second place, the contemporary newspaper accounts are not always careful to designate a railroad by its official title and hence confusion arises in trying to identify the road mentioned in the reference. This brief account is given more to show the effect upon the minds of the people of the Humboldt region than to serve as a history of railroad building.

As early as August 5, 1865, the *Humboldt Times* published the notice of a proposed railroad from Petaluma to Santa Rosa, with the prophecy that "the day is not far distant when Eureka will be connected by rail with San Francisco Bay." This reference probably alluded to the beginnings of the San Francisco and Humboldt Bay Railroad Company, which proposed to build northward from tidewater on San Francisco Bay. Realizing the difficulties involved in the construction, and trusting to the benevolent spirit of Congress, the promoters of the company sought aid from the federal government. A subsidy bill was passed by the Senate, but failed to receive the endorsement of the lower house.⁷⁸ Local assistance was received from the people of Sonoma County, however; work was begun at the Sausalito terminus, and the roadbed graded for a number of miles.⁷⁹ But in spite of this activity operations were discontinued and the company dissolved.⁸⁰

In 1869 the project of a railroad from Sausalito to Humboldt Bay was again revived by a new organization known as the San Francisco and North Pacific Railroad Company. This company was incorporated with a capital of \$8,600,000, and proposed to build a railroad from Sausalito through Marin, Sonoma, and Mendocino counties to Eureka.⁸¹ The road was surveyed as far north as Healdsburg and construction proceeded rapidly.⁸² In fact, so promising were the reports received from this road during the fall of 1871, that the keen ears of the *West Coast Signal* were even then able to detect "the faint echo from the whistle of the advancing locomotive."⁸³ This was due to the report published in the Healdsburg *Flag* that railroad people were buying up large tracts of timberland in Eel River Valley, which report, together with other "inside information," was considered *prima facie* evidence that the road was soon to be built through to Humboldt Bay.⁸⁴

That it was really the intention of the company to hasten the construction of its road to Humboldt Bay seemed confirmed by the report of its agent, who visited the county in

⁷⁸ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 21, 1865; Mar. 17, 1866; Mar. 16, 1867.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, Mar. 28, Apr. 11, May 16, July 11, 1868.

⁸⁰ *Vallejo Recorder*, June 19, 1869; Bancroft, *California*, VII, 583.

⁸¹ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 27, 1869; Lyle's *Railway Manual*, 1870-1871, 140.

⁸² *Humboldt Times*, July 11, Nov. 21, 1868; Dec. 18, 1869.

⁸³ *West Coast Signal*, Nov. 15, 1871.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 6, 1871.

1872 and filed a mortgage for \$10,000,000.⁸⁵ In 1873 this road, which had by that time been extended as far north as Cloverdale, was purchased by Peter Donahue, a change which was believed to promise well for the interests of Humboldt County.⁸⁶ Work was renewed upon the road and the frequent newspaper reports left no question regarding the "construction of this road at a comparatively early day."⁸⁷ The idea of granting a subsidy as an inducement for it to continue its lines to Humboldt was proposed many times, but none was granted, and for various reasons no further extensions were made during the period of this study.⁸⁸

In 1867 a number of railroads were projected from Vallejo as a center, one of them to lead to Santa Rosa and thence into Mendocino and Humboldt counties.⁸⁹ The papers for the incorporation of this road were filed early in 1868. The men of influence behind the scheme made it seem probable that they would be able to secure aid from the federal government.⁹⁰ The United States Senate was willing to grant alternate sections of land to a width of five miles, extending from Calistoga to Humboldt Bay, provided the company would agree to build not less than ten miles a year.⁹¹ Although the subsidy was not granted, the company began, together with other projects, the construction of the road from Suscol, or Napa Junction, to Santa Rosa, which place it hoped to reach in time to compete with the road being built north from Petaluma.⁹²

In addition to these roads, all of which proposed building northward from some point on San Francisco Bay, other lines were suggested from places in the Sacramento Valley. In 1873 Capt. W. H. Fauntleroy set forth arguments for a railroad between Red Bluff and Humboldt Bay, arguing

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1872; Archives of County Recorder, *Mortgages*, E, 172.

⁸⁶ *West Coast Signal*, Jan. 29, 1873; *Poor's Manual*, 1874-1875, 349. Donahue had been one of the original promoters of this road, but had sold out his interest. He now resumed control of the road.

⁸⁷ *West Coast Signal*, Apr. 30, May 14, 1873; *Humboldt Times*, May 16, 1874; Feb. 6, 1875.

⁸⁸ *West Coast Signal*, Dec. 6, 1871; *Humboldt Times*, May 8, 1875; Bancroft, *California* VII, 583, 589. It should be noted that it was this road which afterward purchased the Eureka & Eel River line, and, as the Northwestern Pacific Railroad, completed the connection between San Francisco and Humboldt Bay in October, 1914.

⁸⁹ Cronise, *Natural wealth*, 673-674.

⁹⁰ Among them was Samuel Brannan, see *ante*, 37, 47. He was particularly interested in the development of Calistoga. *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 22, 1868; Vallejo, *Chronicle*, Feb. 8, 1868.

⁹¹ San Francisco, *Bulletin*, July 17, 1868; *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 22, 1868.

⁹² *Humboldt Times*, June 25, Oct. 23, Nov. 27, 1870. This road is referred to as the Vallejo and Humboldt Bay Railroad (in 1868) and later the California Pacific.

that this road would not only give a better market for Humboldt lumber and potatoes, but that it would also, by joining the Central Pacific, give a very direct route east. An effort to interest local capital in this project was without success.⁹³ Similarly, another road was proposed to run northward from Woodland to Humboldt Bay. In the spring of 1875 the temporary organization of the Woodland, Clear Lake and Humboldt Railroad Company was effected and, according to current reports, work was soon to be commenced.⁹⁴ Nothing, however, was accomplished.

From this it will be seen that for more than forty years before the railroad connecting Humboldt Bay with the remainder of the state was actually completed, numerous railroads to that region had been projected; that all the feasible routes had been considered by railroad promoters; and that, in fact, all of the roads which have since been built had already been commenced. The sparsely settled, mountainous region through which this road must of necessity pass served to cool the enthusiasm of railroad men, while the long delay caused the people of the Humboldt region to lose faith in the project.

⁹³ *West Coast Signal*, Dec. 4, 18, 1872; Mar. 5, 1873.

⁹⁴ *Humboldt Times*, May 8, 1875.

CHAPTER XX

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL LIFE

Having traced the spread of settlement and the economic and industrial development of the region during the quarter-century following its occupation by the Americans, this study will be concluded with a brief outline of the main features of its social and political life during the same period.

Pioneer Life, 1850-1860. The life of the settler during the early years was truly that of the pioneer in his struggle for success, for in the same manner as the economic beginnings were attended by hardships, so also was social life. Fortunately there has been preserved the diary of one of the women prominent in the early life of Eureka.¹ This record shows that the activities in Eureka in the early fifties were similar to those of any small village. A democratic spirit prevailed, for neighbors were few. In the case of this pioneer family, a small house in town served as a residence, but a preemption claim, located on a prairie a mile and a half through the woods, also demanded the claimant's presence at times in order to satisfy the legal requirements.

Towns now far inferior to Eureka were then the scenes of much greater business and furnished more social advantages than did the latter. For her shopping the Eureka housewife was dependent upon a visit to Uniontown or Bucksport, or had to delegate this important task to her male relatives.² In addition to reading, sewing and visiting with the neighbors, the only diversions were furnished by religious services and singing parties at the church, a picnic party upon the bay, or an occasional ball.³ The arrival of the ocean steamer was an event heralded by the raising of flags upon the principal buildings, and the record states that the announcement was, in like manner, frequently made of new arrivals in the families of the town. While Brett's saloon was important as a center of social and political life for a large proportion of the

¹ That of Mrs. C. S. Ricks, copy of which is in the possession of the California State Historical Association.

² *Ante*, 61, n. 63.

³ *Humboldt Times*, June 30, 1855.

men of the place, the village church was a strong competitor, as may be judged from the following picturesque description published in the town paper during this period:⁴

In the rear of our office surrounded by logs, stumps and brush, stands a rude structure which our good people call "the church." It is used as a place of public worship for all sorts of denominations, a hall for the Sons of Temperance, singing school, public speaking, and various other unexceptional gatherings.

Union and Bucksport, the other towns upon the bay, were much more advanced than Eureka during these earlier years. The former was the center of the business life of the time and was also the county seat; while Bucksport was enlivened by the presence of the army post.⁵ Trinidad, although small in population, enjoyed frequent visits from the ocean steamers and still hoped to rival the bay towns. Throughout the remainder of the region, however, the life of the settler was distinctly that of the frontiersman who tilled his fields and watched over his stock, trying to protect it, as well as his home and family, from the occasional attacks of the hostile redskin.

Hedged in by mountain ranges, the section communicated with other parts of the state almost exclusively by means of the ocean; but steamer service was very uncertain when not suspended altogether, the passage rate was high, forty dollars being asked for a ticket between San Francisco and Humboldt Bay,⁶ and the mails very irregular. Roads were either entirely lacking or were very poor during these early years; so that the condition of isolation was practically complete.

Beginnings of an Educational System, 1850-1860. One of the surest indications of the social advance of any region is the attention given to the education of its children. Fortunately, in California the men who framed the first constitution recognized this and made generous provision for a public school system. In like manner the local authorities of the Humboldt region came to see the importance of this work, and the beginnings of an educational system were instituted soon after the first settlers located in the region.

⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 11, 1858.

⁵ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 163-164.

⁶ *Ante*, 125, 129.

The first of the public schools was organized at Union during the year 1852. The following year Humboldt County was formed, and the supervision of school affairs was placed in the hands of the assessor, who also acted as superintendent of schools, D. D. Williams being the first one elected to fill this combined office.⁷ During that year there were reported three schools in the county with an enrollment of thirty-three and an average attendance of twenty-five.⁸ The Eureka school district was formed which included the whole of Eureka township, and school was maintained there under George W. Gilkey.⁹ In 1854 quite a considerable sum was expended for school buildings and teachers' salaries, and during this year the number of children in the schools more than doubled that of the previous year. At Union the public school was maintained nine months, at Eureka and Bucksport three months each.¹⁰

In 1855 the school affairs of the county were placed under the direction of the county superintendent of schools, A. J. Heustis being the first man to hold this position.¹¹ The census for the year showed 186 children of school age within the county: Union having 79, Eureka 45, and Bucksport 62.¹² Of these 72 were enrolled in school. During the year, in response to the demand of the settlers south of the bay that their children be given school advantages, the boundaries of the Bucksport district were greatly extended by an order of the board of supervisors, which declared that "the townships of Bucksport, Table Bluff, Pacific and Eel River be and hereby constitute one school district."¹³ An examination of the map shows this to have comprised the entire county with the exception of the Union and Eureka districts, an area of not less than 1500 square miles,¹⁴ more than forty-five miles in extent east and west and over forty north and south.

As the Humboldt region became more thickly settled during succeeding years, the school system developed

⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 18, 1854.

⁸ Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Report*, 1864-1865: 306 *et seq.* This gives statistics for the years from 1853 to 1865.

⁹ Archives of Superintendent of Schools, *Report of Common School Commissioners, Eureka*, 1853. Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 207.

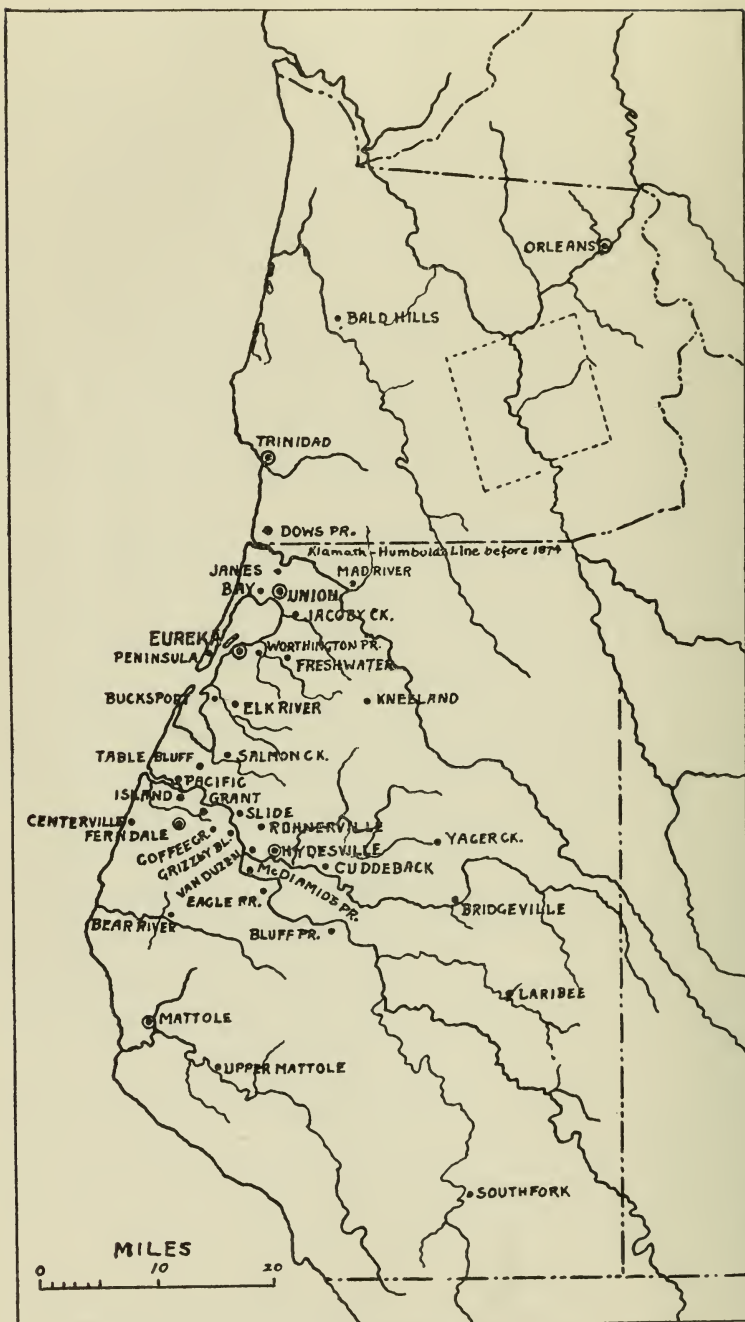
¹⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 18; *Alta California*, Aug. 21, 1854.

¹¹ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 207.

¹² *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 10, 1855.

¹³ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, A, 55, Nov. 5, 1855.

¹⁴ The area of Rhode Island, including both land and water surface, is given as only 1248 sq. mi.



PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN HUMBOLDT BAY REGION, 1875

accordingly. There were five schools reported in 1856 and eight in 1859, the increase being due to the formation of new districts by subdividing the large Bucksport district, giving new schools at Eel River, Hydesville, Pacific, Mattole and Table Bluff.¹⁵

During the period following 1860 little need be said regarding the development of the public school system except to note the increase in the enrollment and the number of school districts within the county. In 1860 there were 328 children enrolled in the public schools of the county; by 1865 this had increased to 569; and by 1875 to 2048.¹⁶ In similar manner the number of school districts also increased, there being twelve in 1865, nineteen in 1870, thirty-one in 1874 and forty in 1875. Four of those included under 1875 were located in the territory acquired during that year by the annexation of a part of Klamath County.¹⁷

During these years the supervision of the public schools of the county had passed through the hands of several capable men. Heustis was followed in 1858 by E. H. Howard, a graduate of the University of the City of New York, who did commendable work in the organization of new school districts. In 1860 he was succeeded by H. H. Severn, who in turn was followed two years later by W. L. Jones, 1862-1869, and J. B. Brown, 1869-1873. All these men rendered efficient service in organizing and extending the educational system of the county.¹⁸

Private Schools and Seminaries, 1850-1875. While the public schools were being thus organized numerous private institutions were also maintained. Union was the favorite town at first, but later Eureka also claimed her share of these institutions. In January, 1855, a French school is recorded as located at Union; in May of the following year a "select school" was opened by J. F. Landsdale, and another in August by Rev. E. J. Vail, a Methodist minister.¹⁹ Early in 1858 a Frenchman opened a school in Union which bore

¹⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 9, May 7, July 30, Aug. 13, Nov. 19, 1859.

¹⁶ Superintendent of Public Instruction, *Reports*, 1864-1865: 306 *et seq.*; 1866-1867: 162; 1874-1875: 139.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, *West Coast Signal*, May 3, 1871; *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 6, Aug. 28, 1875. See page 296 for a map showing the location of the schools of Humboldt County in 1875. This map was compiled by the author from the official records with the assistance of J. B. Brown, superintendent of schools during the latter years covered by this study.

¹⁸ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 207.

¹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 20, 1855; May 3, Aug. 9, 1856.

the dignified title, "Humboldt Collegiate Institute," and offered courses in the "American, Latin, French, German, and Spanish Languages." This was soon afterward taken over by A. Benedict, who also organized a primary school.²⁰ During this period F. Bret Harte was a resident of Union, and in addition to his work on the *Northern Californian* is reported to have taught in one of these schools.²¹ Besides these schools, which were all located at Union, there were a number of private schools in Eureka. One of these was opened during the year 1854; another to supplement the public schools in 1860,²² and still others, limited to young ladies, were opened by Miss Farrington in 1861 and Mrs. W. H. Burton in 1864.²³

There had been much agitation for a seminary of learning located somewhere around Humboldt Bay, but the efforts to establish one had not met with unqualified success. As early as 1855 the people of the Methodist denomination petitioned their annual conference urging that a seminary be located there.²⁴ The local paper followed with editorials setting forth the advantages of the locality and declaring, among other things, that Union was the "most suitable place for a seminary or higher school of any point north of Benicia."²⁵ Notwithstanding this early agitation no recorded action toward the establishment of such an institution was taken for nearly a decade, when Rev. J. W. Hines, the presiding elder of the Humboldt District of the Methodist Episcopal Church, named fourteen men to act as trustees of the Humboldt Academy.²⁶ Land was secured, a suitable building erected during the year, and on May 16, 1866, the first session opened.²⁷ But the attendance did not justify the expense of operation, and so after running for a period of two years the academy was closed for lack of support.²⁸ Mrs. W. H. Burton soon afterward leased the building for a boarding and day school,²⁹ and later it was purchased by Roman Catholics, who used it as a convent.³⁰

²⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 2, Aug. 21, Dec. 25, 1858; Jan. 7, 1860.

²¹ From conversation with one of his pupils, Mrs. James Todd, of Arcata.

²² *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 18, 1854; Aug. 25, 1861.

²³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 16, Dec. 23, 1861; May 28, 1864.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, May 5, 1855.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1855; Nov. 8, 1856.

²⁶ Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of Incorporation*.

²⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 2, 1865; Apr. 28, May 19, 26, 1866.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 27, 1866; Mar. 30, 1867.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 25, 1868.

³⁰ *Northern Independent*, July 5, 1869.

After the sale of the Academy building Mrs. Burton's seminary was removed to a position near the Episcopal Church, where it continued for some time, until superseded by the Young Ladies' Seminary under the direction of Mrs. John A. Watson, and this in turn by the Humboldt Bay Protestant Seminary.³¹ This latter was under the control of a board of seven trustees, incorporated May 23, 1872, with a capital stock of \$12,000.³² As in the case of the earlier institutions this seminary also met with grave difficulties on account of lack of support, with the result that in the fall of 1875 it was announced that at the end of the session it would be closed indefinitely.³³ This notice served to arouse the friends of the school to a renewal of interest, however, and with the opening of the new year it again resumed its work.³⁴ During the year 1871 the Roman Catholics established an academy for young ladies in Eureka³⁵ and a school for boys near Rohnerville, the latter being known as Saint Joseph's College.³⁶

Politics and the Civil War. The political attitude of a new region is in a large measure determined by the conceptions and ideals brought by its settlers from their former homes. It is therefore of significance, as has been noted in an earlier chapter, that a large majority of the settlers of the Humboldt Bay region had migrated from nonslaveholding states, and that the New England element was especially predominant.³⁷ The attitude of these men toward the great issue then apparently so near a crisis is evidenced in part by the nomenclature adopted by them, one of the towns being called Union, while in another the words Union, Liberty, and Constitution appear prominently in connection with street names.³⁸

Although the final opinion of a people can be determined only from their decision as expressed at the ballot box, nevertheless a study of the newspapers which they read and support is of much importance if it is desired to know their ideals and the motives impelling their decisions. The leading

³¹ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 1, 1870; *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 15, 22, Sept. 9, 1871. During 1872 a building was erected on the block between Fifth and Sixth, K and L streets. *Ibid.*, June 29, July 27, 1872.

³² Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of Incorporation*.

³³ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 20, 1875.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, Nov. 27, 1875.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, Feb. 17, 1872.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, Dec. 9, 1871; June 12, Aug. 21, 1875.

³⁷ *Ante*, 108-109.

³⁸ Plat of Humboldt City, *ante*, facing p. 56.

paper during this period was the *Humboldt Times*, established in September, 1854, as an independent weekly.³⁹ The position of independence was maintained upon the political issues of the day, criticism falling upon both Broderick and Gwin, upon President Pierce and the Abolitionists, the denunciation of the latter being particularly strong.⁴⁰ The election returns show that while the people were opposed to the extension of slavery they were very conservative. In the state election of 1855 every precinct in Humboldt County returned a majority in favor of Johnson, the "Know-Nothing" candidate, who received a total of 281 votes as opposed to seventy-seven for Bigler, the Democratic nominee.⁴¹ During the presidential campaign of 1856 the fight was primarily between Buchanan and Fillmore, who received 204 and 191 votes, respectively, but Fremont, the Republican candidate, received only 103 votes, but even this, according to the *Times*, was "a disappointment to everyone."⁴²

During the campaign of 1858 the *Times* displayed much interest in the debates between Lincoln and Douglas. The editor, A. Wiley, avoided committing himself definitely, but in the news items and by other means indicated a decided preference for Douglas. On one occasion he printed without comment an extract from the *Shasta Courier*, which declared:⁴³

A few Democrats in this State have suffered themselves to become so embittered against Senator Douglas as to wish he may be defeated by Abram Lincoln, a Republican of the Abolition stripe. . . . The man who wishes to see him elected over Douglas is no Democrat, no patriot, no friend of his country, but capable of proving a traitor.

In July, 1860, the *Northern Californian*, which had been published in Arcata since the return of the *Times* to Eureka,⁴⁴ was merged with the latter paper under the joint editorship of Walter Van Dyke and S. G. Whipple, it then being declared that in regard to political questions the *Times*

³⁹ Sept. 2, 1854, was the date of the first issue.

⁴⁰ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 7, 21, May 19, 1855.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1855.

⁴² *Ibid.*, Nov. 8, 1856.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, Oct. 2, 1858.

⁴⁴ The *Northern Californian* was first issued in Union (Arcata) in December, 1858, by S. G. Whipple, *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 11, 1858; and merged with the *Times*, July 14, 1860. No files of the paper have been found.

would still be independent although neither "silent nor neutral." Immediately upon receiving the news of the nomination of Douglas for the presidency the paper announced itself as one of his supporters.⁴⁵ Throughout the campaign the fight was waged principally between the factions of the Democratic party, Douglas being supported in the interest of nationalism and conservatism.⁴⁶

At the polls Humboldt County "adhered to the ancient faith," Douglas receiving 445 votes as opposed to 335 for Lincoln, 232 for Breckenridge, and 20 for Bell.⁴⁷ In the distribution of the votes it should be noted that eight of the twelve precincts gave a plurality to Douglas, and that in three of them this amounted to a clear majority; two precincts, Eureka and Pacific (Ferndale), favored Lincoln, the latter giving him more than half of its votes; Bucksport and Mattole stood for Breckenridge; while of the twenty votes cast for Bell, more than a half came from Union.⁴⁸ In like manner Klamath County also stood for Douglas, who received 377 votes, while Breckenridge received 163, Lincoln 92, and Bell 36.⁴⁹

Throughout the campaign the *Times* had attached little importance to the threats of disunion made by the southern papers; and even after the election this paper expressed its "faith in the patriotism of the mass of the southern people," calling attention to the fact that the new administration, since it was unable to control Congress, could do nothing rash even if such were attempted. When, however, it was seen that the leaders of the South were determined to bring about secession, these men were denounced as unscrupulous politicians;⁵⁰ the action of South Carolina in adopting the ordinance of secession was imputed to the "most selfish and unworthy motives;"⁵¹ while the suggestion of an independent Pacific republic was in like manner strongly condemned.⁵² President Buchanan's message was received with a degree of satisfaction, but his failure to act in the relief

⁴⁵ *Humboldt Times*, July 21, 1860.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 3, 1860.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, Nov. 10, 1860.

⁴⁸ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, B, 46-47.

⁴⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 8, 1860.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, Dec. 8, 1860.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 12, 1861.

⁵² *Ibid.*, Jan. 12, Feb. 16, 1861.

of Fort Sumter was branded as "treachery and pusillanimity" which served to encourage the enemies of the nation.⁵³

Lincoln's first inaugural address was considered both "patriotic and conciliatory in tone and statesmanlike in character";⁵⁴ during the coming months, as the spirit of secession gained momentum in the South, so in like degree the feeling of loyalty to the Union found expression in the editorials of the *Times* and in the patriotic demonstrations of the people of the Humboldt region. Liberty poles were erected, patriotic hymns were sung with fervor at religious services, and the celebration of the Fourth of July was made an occasion of great enthusiasm.⁵⁵ Strong resolutions of loyalty were adopted by the people of Klamath County, while in Humboldt County even the Democratic party, which met in convention at Eureka on June 19, 1861, drew up resolutions denouncing the war being carried on against the country as "without justification or decent excuse." They further declared:⁵⁶

We as Democrats are, above all things, for the Union, the Country, and the Flag, against all assailants—no matter who they are, whence they come, or with what power armed, and we will not support any man for office in this crisis who does not unequivocally occupy the same position.

Notwithstanding the loyal attitude of the *Times* it still for a time at least maintained a conservative position, and did not hesitate to take exception to the extreme stand taken by the *New York Tribune* when that paper advocated the complete subjugation of the southern people.⁵⁷ It was issued in mourning upon the death of Douglas,⁵⁸ and in the state campaign of 1861 still held to its opposition to the Republican party which had "brought this great calamity upon the country," but it further declared:⁵⁹

We will at the same time give Abraham Lincoln, as the legitimate head of the government, our support in the suppression of the rebellion from whatever source it may come.

⁵³ *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 5, 26, 1861.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, Mar. 30, 1861.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, May 18, 25, June 22, July 6, 13, 1861.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, May 25, June 22, 1861.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, June 22, 1861.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, June 29, 1861.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, Aug. 3, 1861.

At the election held September 4, 1861, Humboldt County gave 402 votes for Leland Stanford, the Republican candidate for governor; 360 for Conness on the Union-Democratic ticket; and 205 for McConnell, the Breckenridge-Democrat.⁶⁰

In so far as the actual conduct of the war was concerned this portion of the state took little direct part; when, however, it is remembered that during this period Indian hostilities were at their worst and the presence of federal troops was needed for defense, it is little to be wondered that the inhabitants did not enlist in larger numbers for the eastern conflict. The effect of the war upon the movement of troops at Fort Humboldt and elsewhere was very marked, as has been noted in the chapters dealing with the Indian troubles; and many of the officers and men who were once stationed at the local post later rose to high rank in the campaigns of the Civil War.⁶¹ Although the citizens of Humboldt did not enlist directly in the war, they were anxious to volunteer against the Indians and in this manner relieved the regular troops who were withdrawn for active service in the eastern campaigns.

In addition to this indirect participation in the war great interest was taken in the raising of funds for the relief of the soldiers through the National Sanitary Commission and other agencies. At a meeting held at Eureka during October, 1862, as much as \$2,751 was subscribed, and within the next few weeks the amount was greatly increased.⁶² In January, 1864, the treasurer reported \$1,164.28 on hand in addition to \$5,478.50 which had been sent East at an earlier date.⁶³ Similar to the work of the Sanitary Commission was that of the Christian Commission, the two being combined into the Soldiers' Aid Society in December, 1864.⁶⁴ Up to that time about \$9,000 had been sent off, and during the next few weeks this amount was increased to more than \$10,000.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Sept. 14, 1861; Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, B, 93, give the official returns.

⁶¹ Among these should be mentioned Gen. U. S. Grant, who as captain of the 4th Reg. Inf. was stationed at Ft. Humboldt during the year 1854; Gen. Buell, who as major examined and located Ft. Seward; and Brig.-Gen. H. M. Judah, who served as captain during the earlier wars, *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 22, Mar. 1, 1862. On the Confederate side were Gen. G. J. Rains, surgeons Crowell and Guild, and A. B. Hardcastle, *ibid.*, Mar. 29, 1862.

⁶² *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 1, 1862.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, Feb. 6, 1864.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, Dec. 17, 1864.

⁶⁵ Doolittle, *Map of Humboldt County*, 1865.

Many methods were employed in raising these funds. Farmers who lacked ready money were asked to donate potatoes, which were then the chief article of export from Humboldt Bay.⁶⁶ Subscription boxes were placed at the polls on election day and donations solicited from each voter. Klamath County proved itself to be the most generous county in the state upon election day, the average donation being 61.6 cents to a voter, while in Orleans precinct \$307 was subscribed by sixty voters.⁶⁷ Santa Barbara County came second with 45 cents for each voter, and Humboldt third with an average of 35.9 cents.⁶⁸ At another time a large cake was made representing all parts of the Union. These pieces were sold at auction, netting the sum of \$1,003.⁶⁹

As has been noted the conservative policy of President Lincoln as opposed to the radicalism of the South had done much to crystallize public opinion in favor of the Republican administration. In August, 1862, Wiley and Bohall purchased the *Humboldt Times*, and Wiley in an editorial declared his support of President Lincoln, who had "used wisdom and justice in his administration;"⁷⁰ and two years later when the paper passed into the hands of J. E. Wyman, the latter announced that it would be his policy to "proclaim unconditional allegiance to the government and its laws."⁷¹

Public sentiment had already come to favor the administration, as was indicated by the vote for Governor Stanford in the state election of 1861. A more direct expression of this feeling is to be seen in the result of the vote in the presidential election of 1864, for at that time Lincoln received 423 votes as opposed to 262 for McClellan.⁷² In some of the outlying districts the Democratic element was still strong; this was especially true on Yager Creek, the upper Eel River, and the Mattole district, as well as in the Table Bluff and Island precincts.⁷³ Klamath County also gave a majority in favor of Lincoln, but in that region public opinion was more evenly divided.⁷⁴

⁶⁶ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 17, 1864.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, Dec. 17, 1864.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, Feb. 4, 1865.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Jan. 14, 1865.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, Aug. 16, 1862.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, May 7, 1864.

⁷² *Ibid.*, Nov. 19, 1864. This is exclusive of the soldiers' vote, which stood 242 to 48 for Lincoln.

⁷³ *Ante*, 301, n. 48.

⁷⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 26, 1864. It is here stated that the Lincoln majority was but one vote. Klamath was, however, looked upon as a Democratic center. *Ibid.*, Sept. 19, 26, 1863.

After the *Humboldt Times* had become Republican several attempts were made to establish Democratic papers. The first of these was made by Rev. J. W. Hines, who started the *Humboldt Bay Journal* in September, 1865. It does not seem to have had much support, and suspended publication in April, 1867.⁷⁵ Two other Democratic papers then followed in quick succession—the *National Index* from June, 1867, to March, 1868; and the *Humboldt Bay Democrat* during October, 1868.⁷⁶ During the later years other papers with less political bias were established with greater success. Among these should be named the *Northern Independent*, July, 1869, to August, 1872; the *West Coast Signal*, beginning February 15, 1871, and continuing until 1880, first as a weekly and later as a daily; and the *Daily Standard*, established by Richard V. Chadd in April, 1875.⁷⁷ In addition to these there were other papers issued for briefer periods.⁷⁸

Religious Organizations. Methodists. Among the earliest arrivals at Humboldt Bay was a Methodist local preacher, A. J. Heustis. He is said to have conducted the first public religious service at Humboldt Bay, at Bucksport early in the summer of 1850.⁷⁹ During the same year Rev. Asa P. White, a pioneer preacher of California, organized the Methodist Episcopal church at Union (Arcata), to be followed in 1852 by the organization of a Methodist church in the Eel River Valley by Reverend Wesley Harrow, aided by J. Burnell and Mr. Stringfield as local preachers. With this foundation already laid the first annual conference of the Methodist church in California, in 1853, made Humboldt Bay a regular circuit, naming Reverend James Corwin as the pastor.⁸⁰ Union (Arcata) was made a separate circuit the following year under Corwin as pastor, while to Rever-

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Sept. 3, 1865; Apr. 20, 1867. There was much rivalry and bitter feeling between this paper and the *Times*.

⁷⁶ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 215-216.

⁷⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 10, 1875. The *Humboldt Standard* does not have a file of its first two volumes.

⁷⁸ A good account of local newspapers is given in Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 215-217. Files of some of these may be found in the office of the County Clerk at Eureka, viz.: *Humboldt Times*, 1860-1897; *West Coast Signal*, 1871-1874; *Northern Independent*, 1869-1871. At Orleans Bar the *Klamath News*, established in 1865, and the *Northern Record* were the most important.

⁷⁹ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 213-214, has a very good account of the churches. It must be remembered that religious services had been held by the Spaniards at Trinidad Bay in 1775 when the Bodega expedition landed there. *Ante*, 23-24.

⁸⁰ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 213; Anthony, *Fifty years of Methodism*, 124.

end A. H. Shafer was assigned the Bucksport circuit, including all the region from Eureka southward.⁸¹

The camp meeting, always associated with frontier Methodism, was not lacking here. The peninsula opposite Eureka offered an excellent place for these services. In August, 1855, the first camp meeting was held there and boats were run from Eureka at regular intervals.⁸² The attendance at times was large, for it served both a religious and a social need, offering a chance for friends to meet and families to reunite. At this particular camp meeting it is reported that the Reverend Asa White was on the grounds with his entire family, which consisted of his wife, two sons, eight daughters, six sons-in-law and thirty grandchildren.⁸³ For some years the grounds across from Eureka were used as a meeting place,⁸⁴ but later the center shifted to Eel River Valley.⁸⁵

After Eureka had gained importance it was made the center of a separate Methodist society, which was organized there in November, 1859.⁸⁶ Soon afterward the old church, which had been used in common for religious, educational and social purposes, was replaced by a new edifice, dedicated March 4, 1860,⁸⁷ and this in turn by another during 1867.⁸⁸ During the year 1860, while the Indian troubles were at their height, a Methodist church was established at Ferndale in Eel River Valley. The circuit was large, including all the district from Rohnerville to Mattole, and the pastor, Reverend William Morrow, experienced many difficulties in meeting his appointments.

Other Religious Denominations. The Roman Catholic clergy were the next after the Methodists to occupy the new country, their first organization being formed by the Reverend Father Thomas Crinion in Eureka in 1858, and their first building being erected in 1861.⁸⁹ In 1867 a church was also built at Table Bluff, and in 1871 one at Rohnerville.

⁸¹ Anthony, *Fifty years of Methodism*, 141-142; *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 2, Dec. 2, 1854.

⁸² *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 4, 11, 18, 1855.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 22, 1855, from *California Christian Advocate*.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, July 11, 1857.

⁸⁵ *Humboldt Times*, June 25, 1859, announces meeting in Eel River Valley at the "same place as last year." *Ibid.*, July 20, 1861; also in Mattole, *ibid.*, Aug. 3, 1861; July 12, 1862; at Rohnerville, *ibid.*, Aug. 15, 1868, June 5, 1869.

⁸⁶ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 213.

⁸⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 20, 1859; Feb. 18, 1860.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, Mar. 17, 24, 1866; Nov. 9, Dec. 28, 1867.

⁸⁹ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 214; *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 2, 1861.

On October 30, 1860, the First Congregational church of Eureka was organized with Reverend W. L. Jones as pastor and Dr. Jonathan Clark as president of the board of trustees. A neat church was soon erected on Fourth and G Streets, with a parsonage near at hand.⁹⁰ The second church of this denomination was incorporated at Hydesville in April, 1870, with the Reverend Mr. Lyman acting as the pastor.⁹¹

At the opening of the year 1860 the people of Presbyterian preference in Arcata formed themselves into an organization. This was the first Presbyterian church in the region. Their membership at that time was small and for several months their services were held in the building owned by the Methodists. Finally, on March 31, 1861, their own edifice was dedicated and made a pleasing addition to the town.⁹²

In 1862 the United Brethren organized a society at Rohnerville, their first minister being Reverend Israel Sloan. Three years later a second organization was effected. In a manner similar to the Methodists, with whom they have many common characteristics, camp meetings were very popular with this denomination. Two camp grounds were held by them for this purpose in Eel River Valley.⁹³

In Eureka during 1866 a movement was on foot for the building of a Baptist church,⁹⁴ while the first Episcopal church in the region, Christ Church, Eureka, was organized June 1, 1870.⁹⁵ The following year a building was erected and dedicated by Bishop W. I. Kipp on February 5, 1871.⁹⁶ Through the generosity of one of its vestrymen it was equipped with chimes which became an attractive feature of the town.⁹⁷

Fraternal and Benevolent Societies: The Masons. Probably the first fraternal society organized in this portion of California was formed by the Free and Accepted Masons, at

⁹⁰ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 214; *Humboldt Times*, Apr. 13, 20, 27, 1861. The Articles of Incorporation of this church were first filed, Aug. 2, 1862, Archives of County Clerk *Articles of Incorporation*.

⁹¹ Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of Incorporation*.

⁹² Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 214; *Humboldt Times*, July 21, 1860; Mar. 23, Apr. 6, 1861. Only three members when first organized, J. S. Todd, *History of the First Presbyterian Church of Arcata*.

⁹³ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 214; *Humboldt Times*, Aug. 12, 1865; Sept. 2, 1867.

⁹⁴ *Humboldt Times*, Mar. 24, 1866.

⁹⁵ Since 1868 the organization of this church had been under consideration, *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 21, 1868; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 213.

⁹⁶ *West Coast Signal*, Feb. 15, 1871.

⁹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Oct. 16, 1869. These were among the first chimes brought to the state.

Bucksport, August 10, 1854.⁹⁸ A neat hall was soon erected by them at that place, the lower floor being occupied as a school room.⁹⁹ On May 12, 1856, the second Masonic lodge in the region was organized at Uniontown (No. 106)¹⁰⁰ and later two other lodges were formed in Eel River Valley: Eel River Lodge (No. 147) at Hydenville, September 11, 1860; and Ferndale Lodge (No. 193), during the year 1870.¹⁰¹ On November 19, 1871, the Myrtle Lodge of Perfection was instituted in Eureka.¹⁰²

The Odd Fellows. The Independent Order of Odd Fellows established their first organization in the region September 6, 1858, when Humboldt Lodge (No. 77), was formed at Eureka.¹⁰³ On April 25 of the following year a celebration of all the Odd Fellows around Humboldt Bay was held with exercises first at Eureka, after which all went on the steamer *Glide* to Union (Arcata) where with due ceremony Anniversary Lodge (No. 85) was organized. May 24, 1867, Mount Zion Encampment was organized at Arcata, but was transferred to Eureka during the year 1872. About this time two other lodges were established in Eel River Valley. The first of these was Eel River (No. 210) instituted October 15, 1872, at Rohnerville,¹⁰⁴ the other being Fortuna Lodge (No. 221), organized August 30, 1873.

Temperance Societies. During these years there were established many other organizations having as their purpose the moral, intellectual, or enonomic welfare of their members and the community. One of the earliest of these was the order of the Sons of Temperance. For some time there had been a local organization known as the Reformed Drunkards, but on January 15, 1855, it received a charter from the Grand Lodge and was organized at Union as the Sons of Temperance.¹⁰⁵ Considering that this was still so thoroughly a frontier region, the temperance sentiment manifested was strong. The American Hotel at Union, kept by Captain J. C. Bull, was especially advertised as a "temperance

⁹⁸ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 210-212, for the whole subject of fraternal orders. This date was given by J. B. Brown, a pioneer Mason.

⁹⁹ *Humboldt Times*, Dec. 2, 1854; Mar. 31, 1855.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, May 3, 1856.

¹⁰¹ Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 210; and J. B. Brown.

¹⁰² *Humboldt Times*, Nov. 25, 1871.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, Sept. 11, 1858.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1872.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, Dec. 16, 1854; Jan. 20, 1855.

house,"¹⁰⁶ and in the state-wide election upon the issue of "license" or "no license" in September, 1855, Humboldt County lined up against the license policy.¹⁰⁷ In 1858 the Lone Star Division of the Sons of Temperance (No. 51) was organized in Eureka.¹⁰⁸ The temperance sentiment again rose during the early seventies, resulting in the formation of the Order of Good Templars (No. 269) in Eureka in 1872, and the reawakening of the Sons of Temperance.¹⁰⁹ During the year 1874 the question of liquor license again became a political issue in the county. In the three townships of Union, Eureka, and Bucksport, the vote stood in each case opposed to the issuance of licenses. In the three other townships the supervisors refused to canvass the vote because of irregularity in the calling of the elections.¹¹⁰

Humboldt Bay Relief Association. The large number of men around Humboldt Bay who were engaged in the lumber business, with the resultant injuries and loss of life, called forth the suggestion that a Lumberman's Protective Union be organized which should provide insurance against loss by such injuries.¹¹¹ In accordance with this idea an organization was effected October 26, 1872, under the name of Humboldt Bay Mutual Relief Association.¹¹² As set forth in its articles of incorporation the purpose of the association was:

to secure to the families or friends of deceased members such pecuniary aid as shall shield them against the ills attending those who are left unprotected, and at the same time avoid such expenses as would impoverish its members or place the society beyond the reach of those most needing its aid; and also to afford a safe and economic deposit for those wishing to accumulate a sum for future use for themselves or families.

The general plan of the association was to pay to the nominee of a member, in case of death of such member, a sum of

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, Jan. 20, 1855.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, Sept. 15, 1855. The Humboldt County vote stood for license 33, no license 40; Klamath County was strong in favor of license, the vote there being 78 to 19; while in the state at large the vote stood in favor of license 27,414 to 21,891. *Ibid.*, Oct. 13, 1855.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1858.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 14, 1872; Jan. 4, 1875.

¹¹⁰ Archives of County Clerk, *Minutes of Board of Supervisors*, D, 306, 313, 320.

¹¹¹ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 22, 1868; Nov. 26, 1870.

¹¹² Archives of County Clerk, *Articles of Incorporation*, filed Nov. 2, 1872. The employees of Trinidad had taken the initiative in this movement. *Humboldt Times*, Jan. 6, 1872.

money not exceeding three dollars for each member of the association. In 1874 the constitution was revised and the amount fixed at one dollar in gold coin for each member in good standing in the association at the time of the death.¹¹³ During the first year the secretary's report shows a membership of one hundred thirty-three with no deaths reported.¹¹⁴ At the end of the third year there were five hundred forty members enrolled and the amount of cash on hand was \$1,872.16.¹¹⁵ On July 14, 1875, another organization of similar nature was formed, known as the Humboldt Bay Workingmen's Protective Association.¹¹⁶ This organization provided for weekly payments to members who might be taken sick or be otherwise disabled. An entrance fee of four dollars was charged and quarterly dues were one dollar. The benefits were to amount to ten dollars per week if the proper committee recommended that the member was entitled to it.

The Humboldt County Agricultural Society. An association having a somewhat different purpose was The Humboldt County Agricultural Society. This organization was effected at Hydesville, October 13, 1860, and in accordance with the preliminary announcement was composed of those citizens of the county "interested in the progress of agriculture, the mechanical arts and the general development and material resources of Humboldt County." The first officers were: Dr. Jonathan Clark, president; Samuel Strong, vice president; W. T. Olmstead, treasurer, and W. J. Sweasy, secretary.¹¹⁷

The aims of the society were developed by means of annual meetings and fairs. At the meetings papers were read and addresses given on various topics relating to agricultural development. The first of these meetings was held at Eureka on June 1, 1861,¹¹⁸ and the first fair was held at Hydesville during the first week in October.¹¹⁹ For several years after this the county fair was held annually. The first

¹¹³ Archives of County Clerk, *Certificate of Association*, filed July 15, 1874.

¹¹⁴ Archives of County Clerk, *Record B*, 129-130.

¹¹⁵ *Humboldt Times*, Feb. 12, 1876.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Oct. 9, 1875.

¹¹⁷ *Humboldt Times*, Sept. 15, Oct. 6, 20, 1860.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, June 8, May 11, June 22, 1861.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Oct. 12, 19, 1861.

two fairs were held at Hydesville,¹²⁰ but in 1863 the building of a race course on Rick's Prairie, near Eureka, caused a change to that place.¹²¹ There were many hindrances to the success of these undertakings. The Indian wars, together with the discovery of gold in the Washoe mines in Nevada, tended to deplete the population of the county; while the general financial depression due to the Civil War made money scarce, so that at times the fairs were held at financial loss.¹²² Furthermore, undue emphasis on the element of horse racing to the neglect of real agricultural development contributed its share to the failure of the whole plan,¹²³ and the association disorganized. After several years of inactivity the idea of an agricultural fair and cattle show was again revived, and a fair was held in October of 1869.¹²⁴ During the year 1873 the Farmers' Protective Union was organized in Eureka;¹²⁵ while the Granger movement found support in the outlying districts.¹²⁶

The Pioneer Society. Evidence of the consciousness that Humboldt was gradually emerging from its frontier status is to be seen in the organization of the Pioneer Society of Humboldt County. A quarter-century had passed since settlements were first made on Humboldt Bay; many new conditions had arisen which displaced earlier economic and social relations; many of the first settlers had passed away and new ones had come to occupy the region. During the year 1875 a movement was launched which resulted in the formation of the Pioneer Society of Humboldt County on January 8, 1876.¹²⁷

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Oct. 11, 1862.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, Sept. 12, Oct. 10, 1863.

¹²² *Ibid.*, Oct. 17, 1863.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, Oct. 2, 1869.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, Oct. 2, 23, 1869. The South Park race course in Eureka had been built by Jonathan Clark in 1868 or 1869. *Ibid.*, Mar. 12, 1870.

¹²⁵ *West Coast Signal*, July 16, 1873.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, Oct. 15, 1873.

¹²⁷ *Humboldt Times*, May 8, 15, 1875; Jan. 15, 1876; Elliott, *Humboldt County*, 165-167.

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Election Returns, 1853-1872.

These are the original poll lists, tally sheets, etc. They are of interest especially in reference to the county seat election of 1854. The tabulated returns are in the Minutes of the Supervisors.

Great Register, 1866-1875.

The early Great Registers are a useful source of information in regard to the nativity, age, residence, occupation, etc., of registered voters.

Minutes of the Board of Supervisors, 1853-1875. Vols. A-E.

A most useful record on account of the wide administrative functions of this board. Contains information regarding the formation and modification of school, road, and election districts, election returns, county ordinances and franchises, and the general control of county affairs.

Miscellaneous Papers of the District and County Courts.

Much valuable information is buried in the judgment roll or file of the courts. Use was here made of the papers in the case of Van Dyke vs. Ricks, including the transcript of evidence and the judge's decision which throw much light upon the early history of Bucksport.

Index to Naturalized Citizens, vol. 1.

Gives name, place of birth, date of naturalization, etc.; of value therefore for information regarding the nativity of the foreign-born population.

Road Petitions.

Humboldt County. Recorder.

Deed Books.

The historical value of the record of deeds and land transfers is apparent. The early deed books are, however, of greater value than the name implies for they are in reality often also used for general or miscellaneous records.

"*Green Book—Deeds—City of Eureka*," 1850.

A record of especial value containing data on the early land claims in and around Eureka. As the claims are described by metes and bounds it is not always easy to identify their location.

Indian Indentures, 1860-1862. 1 bundle.

A bundle of 105 indenture papers whereby Indians were apprenticed to the settlers as servants.

Maps: *Humboldt City*, 1850; *Bucksport*, 1850; *Uniontown-Bucksport Wagon Road*, 1854.

Miscellany, Book A.

As the name implies this volume was used for recording many kinds of documents, such as agreements, articles of incorporation, etc.

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Preemption Claims, Klamath County, 1851-1853.

Record Book of the Town of Union, 1851-1853.

The first entry contains the list of voters and results of an election held at Union (Arcata) Apr. 1, 1851. The last entry is Oct. 5, 1853.

"*Record Book No. 1, Trinity Co., Calfa,*" 1850-1851.

Contains preemption notices, deeds, etc., for lands around Humboldt Bay.

Records of Co. Clerk, Books A and B.

These are records of official bonds with other miscellaneous documents, including agreements, powers of attorney, preemption and school land claims.

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This is a record for the years 1850-1851 and includes preemption notices, deeds, powers of attorney, etc. The first entry is the preemption filed by the exploring party which first laid out Trinidad in April, 1850, and gives a brief history of the expedition. This book is of great value in the early history of Trinidad and the surrounding territory.

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Minor vs. the United States.

A transcript of evidence made for the plaintiff, Isaac Minor. Of value in matters relating to the Indian troubles around Arcata and Redwood Creek.

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Declaratory statements, 1850-1860.

These are the statements filed by the settlers upon public lands, setting forth the date of settlement and their purpose to apply for preemption right. They are useful in giving the names of the settlers, date and place of settlement for the period preceding the actual sale of the lands as shown by the tract books. The Abstract contains practically the same information.

Plat books.

These books contain reproductions of the plats made by the U. S. surveyors. A page or sheet is used for each township. Scale, $\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the inch. This record has been found useful, not only in determining the date of survey of the various townships and section lines, but also because the plats indicate the location of many buildings, roads, fields and fences as they were at the date the survey was made.

Tract books.

These volumes are arranged by township and range. Each volume has space for several townships, and are further subdivided to allow space for entries under each section. The record of lands sold is then entered in the portion of the book allotted

to the land section. From this record the amount and particular subdivisions of land sold and unsold can easily be determined for any particular date.

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Used by permission of H. L. Ricks.

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This was used in 1917 by permission of Mr. James McNulty, of Crescent City, who had the original document bearing the signature of the members of the company.

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This is a very interesting diary describing the experiences of a young woman in San Francisco Aug. 1-Oct. 15, 1853, and in Eureka as the wife of one of its most prominent citizens, Sept. 9, 1854-Mar. 4, 1855. Used by permission of her son, H. L. Ricks.

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Much use was made of the weekly issues of this paper, beginning with its first number.

It was found to be a most useful source for the current events of the period. After allowing for the limitations common to local newspapers the information was found to be remarkably reliable when checked with the official records and other sources. The local newspapers reflect most clearly the activities, thoughts, and ambitions of the community, and although they require judicious handling are a most valuable source for local history.

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